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PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MAINSTREAMING THEIR HANDICAPPED
CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Ph.D. 1984

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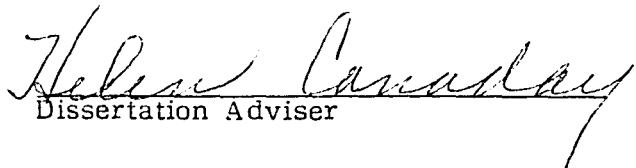
by

Patsy C. Austin

A Dissertation submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Doctor of Philosophy

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Approved by


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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Preschool mainstreaming is a practice and an issue currently receiving much attention. In conjunction with the growth of preschool integration, research was conducted examining the individuals who created, implemented, and evaluated such programs. However, thus far, parents have been excluded from the evaluation process.

The purpose of this research was to examine parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. Furthermore, the investigator viewed it as an opportunity for parents to evaluate their child's program, an opportunity not previously afforded, and a right which has typically been ignored.

A descriptive self-report design was utilized and questionnaires were self-administered by parents of handicapped preschoolers who were currently being mainstreamed in the Guilford County Head Start Program. Thirty of these parents (63% of the population) comprised the sample for the study. A six-page, fifty-item data collection instrument was developed, entitled Parental Attitude Survey.

Data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages of response categories for each individual item. The results were examined focusing on five variables which were assumed to contribute to the determination of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming.

Nine conclusions were drawn from the analysis of data: 1) An overwhelming majority of the parents polled seemed to perceive themselves to possess a significant role within their child's preschool center.

2) Concerning the curriculum and programming strategies utilized by teachers, a majority of the parents polled seemed to be very satisfied. 3) An overwhelming majority of the parents polled indicated that they were under the opinion that a preschool education program, containing various curriculum and programming components, existed within their child's center. 4) Concerning progress observed, a majority of the parents polled reported that they had observed much progress in their child's developmental skills. 5) A vast majority of the parents polled seemed to be unfamiliar with six terms relative to mainstreaming. 6) Attempts to measure parental familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming was not an efficient device for the explanation of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. 7) With respect to parents' overall responses to the Parental Attitude Survey, it was concluded that a majority of the parents polled were satisfied with preschool mainstreaming in the various programs. 8) A great need for parent education was evidenced in reference to the issues and practices of mainstreaming. 9) Parents' perceptions of the amount of program contact was viewed as a potentially significant factor in the evaluation of program satisfaction.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Preschool mainstreaming is a practice and an issue receiving much attention in present-day society. Placing handicapped children in preschool and day care programs is of great interest to the parents of young children, the teachers who work with them, and to the legislators who mandate their acceptance into these programs.

Early intervention, preschool mainstreaming, and special education programs for preschoolers are relatively new concepts in the field of education for the handicapped. Years of litigation have forced public education facilities to provide services for handicapped children; however, mainstreaming initially focused on elementary-school-aged children. Therefore, literature concerning preschoolers is quite limited.

When the judicial system made additional provisions to encompass children of preschool age, the process was given a new dimension. Although Public Law 94-142 does not directly make provisions for the birth to three-year-old group and only minimally for three, four, and five-year-olds, tremendous strides are being taken in the field of early intervention and early education. The proliferation of centers providing services to handicapped infants and preschoolers, as well as their families is of tremendous importance (Hayden, 1978).

Fowler (1968) saw much of our national effort to promote day care and preschool education as the arrival of the conviction that children could learn much earlier than previously thought possible.

Subsequently, day care programs for culturally deprived children were organized, examined, and later modified to enhance their effectiveness (Evans, 1975). Now, an additional argument for the expansion of day care is an ever-increasing trend toward the integration of handicapped with "normal" preschoolers (Council for Exceptional Children, 1971).

In conjunction with the growth of preschool integration came research examining the individuals who created, implemented, and evaluated such programs (Winkelstein, Shapiro, Tucker, & Shapiro, 1974). But what about the parents? Although parents may not be afforded an opportunity to determine the components of the overall curriculum and programming plans, their role as participators and the potential effects that a preschool program may have on their handicapped child's development certainly warrants an opportunity to convey parental attitudes. And yet, in reference to parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming for handicapped children, the parents have been excluded from the evaluation process.

The exclusion of parents' attitudes in investigations focusing on preschool mainstreaming is an oversight on the part of researchers which can no longer go uncorrected. Investigations of this nature would be significant for several reasons. First, educators and day care workers need to discover if they are meeting the expectations of the parents whose children they serve. Second, it is inefficient to plan and execute a preschooler's education in isolation of the parents. Their input could be invaluable. Third, the roles which the parents

play as a part of the family unit make them an integral part of their child's early learning experiences. Furthermore, teachers need to secure parents' understanding of the mainstreaming processes, and their support of educational endeavors if teachers are to acquire parental assistance in providing continuity for the developing child.

Parents of nonhandicapped preschoolers expect and often demand optimal learning environments, and parents of handicapped preschoolers cannot be expected to be content with mere placement for their children. These parents have labored long and hard for legislation to include their children in the mainstream of education. It is important that researchers give parents of handicapped children the opportunity to evaluate the techniques of the teachers who work with their children and to evaluate the strategies used to promote learning through curriculum and programming. Therefore, the purpose of the present research was to afford parents the opportunity to evaluate their child's program, and furthermore, to discover whether or not they were satisfied with the preschool mainstreaming process.

The commitment to incorporate handicapped children in the mainstream requires that attempts be made to determine whether or not the parents are satisfied with the practice. The provision of services to the children is only one component of the endeavor. The inclusion of parents is mandatory in order to assure or encourage parental support. Without parental feedback, educators of special children cannot ascertain if they are meeting parents' expectations, or discover whether or not parents are content with the results of the program.

It is feasible that some sensitivity may exist on the part of both administrators and teachers when parents are asked to assess their child's program. However, the important role the parents play in every child's life, innately affords them the right to voice an opinion concerning their child's education.

In support of this premise, Howard Clifford (1978) from the National Institute on Mental Retardation in Toronto stated,

The idea of opening their service for inspection by persons other than staff is foreign to most service administrators in all areas of children's and adult's services. Nonetheless, the right of the consumer (i.e., the parents who are indirectly receiving services), to be aware of and judge the kind of service being delivered needs to be recognized. Furthermore, if the administrators and staff are seriously committed to providing high quality services, they must encourage critical assessment from parents and other members of the public. (p. 29).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. Specifically, are the parents satisfied with mainstreaming in preschool programs, as measured by an attitude survey?

The gathering of information concerning five variables was viewed as a viable approach to answering the question. The variables are as follows:

1. The parents' perception of their role within the preschool program.
2. Parents' opinions concerning the existence of an educational program containing various curriculum components.

3. The degree of parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming.

4. The amount of progress parents had observed in their children's various developmental skills.

5. Parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming.

No study was found in reviewing the literature which addressed the concept of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming; therefore, no instrument was available for such measurement. It was necessary to design an instrument, an attitude survey, for the purpose of this study, consisting of items focusing on each of the aforementioned variables.

The investigator believed that these variables related to and affected each other in such a way that their interrelationship was useful in determining parental satisfaction overall. Parental satisfaction was operationally defined as follows: With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who perceived themselves to possess a significant role within the center program, who were also under the opinion that a preschool education program existed containing several curriculum components, who were satisfied with the job teachers were doing in reference to curriculum and programming, and who had observed progress in the various developmental skills areas, were more satisfied than parents who were negative in several of these expressions.

It was also conjectured that an examination of the fifth variable, parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming, could also provide insights in the interpretation of parental satisfaction.

Since mainstreaming preschoolers is a relatively recent practice, any research of this nature could be beneficial for several reasons:

1. A review of the literature indicated the absence of any studies which dealt specifically with parental attitudes toward or the evaluation of their handicapped child's program. The parents' role in providing continuity for the developing child necessitates their support of the mainstreaming process and mandates that educators seek the parents' approval.

2. Teachers of handicapped children need to discover whether or not they are meeting the parents' expectations. Such insights may uncover the presence of unrealistic expectations, and subsequently, lead to a parent education policy designed to alleviate discontent.

3. Each of the components (variables) included in the investigation could provide valuable insights to both teachers and administrators. Parents' negative expressions could locate areas or facets of the program where change or modification is needed. Therefore, the investigation could serve as a form of program evaluation benefitting both teachers and parents.

4. Research could also be of interest to paraprofessionals and professionals in mainstreamed programs as they accept handicapped children into their programs.

5. The knowledge that the assessment of parental satisfaction has gained attention in research may encourage other programs to see the merits of creating their own assessment mechanisms.

Definitions

The following terms used throughout the proposed study were defined as follows:

Preschool mainstreaming has been identified by Blacher-Dixon (1979) as having two types: traditional mainstreaming and reverse mainstreaming. Traditional mainstreaming refers to the integration of handicapped children, e.g., Head Start. Reverse mainstreaming describes the integration of nonhandicapped children into preschool classrooms originated for handicapped children, e.g., Handicapped Children's Early Education Programs.

Early intervention refers to programs originated for mentally handicapped children from birth to prekindergarten age. The concept encompasses a multitude of terms: high risk infants, developmentally delayed, environmentally impoverished; mildly, moderately, or severely mentally retarded or handicapped (Clifford, 1978).

Programming in day care means "providing nonsegregated, same, or similar facilities and activities for children with developmental difficulties" (Meisworth & Madle, 1975, p. 164).

Curriculum refers to the education plan which is made up of behavioral objectives and long- and short-term goals which focus on all areas of child development: motor skills, cognitive skills, self-help skills, language skills, and social skills.

Normalization was defined as the "utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or

maintain personal behaviors and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (Wolfensberger, 1973, p. 28).

Normalized day care refers to the integration of handicapped with nonhandicapped children (Neisworth & Madle, 1975).

Public Law 94-142 refers to federal legislation in November 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. The educational implications were that school systems could no longer refuse to admit handicapped students into educational programs (Turnball & Schultz, 1979).

"According to this mandate, children as young as three years of age must be provided a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (i.e., a normal preschool) if the state provides such programs to nonhandicapped children (Blacher-Dixon, 1979, p. 1).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Preschool mainstreaming has received growing attention in recent years for several reasons. It is no longer a concept held merely by special educators, but is, in fact, a practice incorporated in many types of preschool programs, and it is a support service sought after by many parents of handicapped children. The ramifications of its development have affected not only teachers who are being asked to implement it, but also the parents who seek such programs. The most important impact, however, may be observed in the children who are currently being given the opportunity to develop in an environment with non-handicapped peers: an opportunity not historically available in our society.

Studies have examined how preschool programs sought to integrate handicapped preschoolers and described social integration as a possible "measure of success" (Peterson & Haralick, 1977). Earlier researchers examined these preschool programs focusing on the individuals who created, implemented, and evaluated such programs (Winkelstein, Shapiro, Tucker, & Shapiro, 1974). In other words, research efforts have employed only the individuals who are actively participating in the mainstreaming processes. Obviously, research of this nature is pertinent and merits inclusion in the body of literature. However, past research has not included studies dealing specifically with one very important group of individuals--the parents.

The major gap in the body of literature resulting from the exclusion of parents in the evaluation of preschool mainstreaming, points to a great need for the forthcoming research proposal.

A review of the literature will discuss topics related to preschool mainstreaming and will describe the few studies which deal even remotely with parental attitudes. Although no studies were found which dealt specifically with parental satisfaction in reference to curriculum and programming, two studies of this nature conducted by this investigator will be discussed. The review focuses on the following topics: preschool mainstreaming, limited research, the values of integration, normalized day care, children in day care with learning handicaps, programming for the developmentally delayed, social interaction in the integrated preschool, program evaluation, research focusing on parents' attitudes, and a description of two studies conducted by this investigator.

Preschool Mainstreaming

Blacher-Dixon (1979) identifies two types of preschool mainstreaming: traditional mainstreaming and reverse mainstreaming. Traditional mainstreaming refers to the integration of handicapped children into preschool classrooms originated for nonhandicapped children, e.g., Head Start. On the other hand, reverse mainstreaming describes the integration of nonhandicapped children into preschool classrooms originated for handicapped children: examples are Handicapped Children's Early Education Programs, or the First Chance network.

The question arises: Why mainstream preschoolers? The strong rationale for mainstreaming includes legal factors, parents, teachers, and empirical research findings (Blacher-Dixon, 1979).

Today, the most compelling is the legal factor in favor of preschool mainstreaming which is addressed by the Public Law 94-142. "According to this mandate, children as young as three years of age must be provided a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (i.e., a normal preschool) if the state provides such programs to nonhandicapped children. The precise rules for fulfilling this requirement are contained in the 1977 Federal Register (p. 42488)" so they will not be reviewed here (Blacher-Dixon, 1979, p. 1).

The notion of legislating integration of handicapped and non-handicapped preschools is not a brand new concept. In 1972 a Congressional mandate ordered the Head Start program to serve 10% handicapped children. Since that time the issue has definitely become a legislative and judicial preference in balancing the interests of children and schools (Turnball, 1977).

Recently, several authors have conceptualized strong rationale for preschool mainstreaming from the current literature. They suggest that preschool mainstreaming is:

...an opportunity for normal play and social experiences as well as opportunity for the handicapped to learn to cope with society. (Cohen, 1975)

...an opportunity for the nonhandicapped to learn about handicapped children, and to learn about individual differences. (Guralnick, 1976)

...an opportunity for the handicapped to model socially appropriate behavior. (Snyder, Apolloni, & Cook, 1977)

...strongly supported by parents. (Cansler, 1977; D'Audney, 1976)

...imperative for the development of a positive self-concept. (Kennedy, Northcott, McCauley, & Williams, 1976)

...and, preparation for later education within the public schools and society in general. (Wynne, Brown, Dakof, & Ulfeder)

Although recent evidence may indicate that handicapped children who attend mainstreamed preschool do display subsequent academic progress (DeWeerd, 1977), school success has not as yet been the primary support for preschool mainstreaming (Blacher-Dixon, 1979). This may be due to the fact that the practice is so young, and at this point in time, longitudinal studies are not available. Instead, support comes in general from the social or emotional gains that have occurred, i.e., evidence that preschool mainstreaming may be "psychologically healthy." However, information concerning the attitudes of parents of nonhandicapped children toward preschool mainstreaming is not well documented. In addition, many assumptions which relate to the benefits of mainstreaming (for both preschoolers and their parents) have not yet been empirically tested (Blacher-Dixon, 1979).

Limited Research

Unfortunately, research which identifies the specific conditions "unique to the mainstreamed setting" relating to the development

of the handicapped child is very limited (Guralnick, 1976). Guralnick (1976) states that there are very few studies on integrating handicapped and nonhandicapped preschoolers.

Also, very limited empirical research has been reported regarding socialization and play behavior of handicapped and nonhandicapped children in preschool programs. Peterson and Haralick (1977) suggested that most of the relevant research literature concerns elementary-school-age children or adolescents. Evidence within the literature is also conflicting because the studies are not comparable to each other. They are not comparable with respect to research setting, research design, age and sex distribution of children, type and severity of handicap involved, kinds and number of activities in which handicapped children were integrated and ratios of handicapped to nonhandicapped children (Peterson & Haralick, 1977).

Due to the incomparable nature of past research, it is impossible to know without further study how generalizable they are to children within a preschool framework. Additional problems arise when the truly integrated preschool with a large ratio of handicapped to nonhandicapped children is considered. Peterson and Haralick (1977) agree that "the lack of empirical data in the area of preschool integration of the handicapped raises a number of important research questions about the integration process and the assumptions on which it is based" (p. 236).

This does not imply that the researchers have found the issue of such trivial nature, or so societally insignificant that it does not

lend itself to investigation. On the contrary, the issue of preschool mainstreaming is so newly implemented that only a few have examined it, and many parents have never, as yet, even contemplated enrolling their handicapped preschoolers in a program. This is probably due to some parental guilt, some apprehension, unawareness of availability, or perhaps a combination of all three. In progressive society, with parents becoming more aware of characteristics of education of the handicapped, and the possibilities open to them, they are now more willing to leave their handicapped infant or preschooler with a trained individual for a daytime program. The law has now been mandated to accept these special children into "normal" programs, and since some parents have begun to trust center programs and teachers so that they will enroll their children in these existing programs, the question arises, "What is occurring?" Thus far, no preschool mainstreaming studies have been conducted to answer this question.

Researchers are just beginning to explore the practice, and the parental attitudes toward mainstreaming young children into group care.

The literature contains no readily available formula for implementing preschool mainstreaming, nor does it relate to any particular service model (e.g., home-based, home-followed by center, center-based, technical assistance or consultative service, etc.) to successful child outcomes. (Blacher-Dixon, 1979, p. 3)

Values of Integration

Today handicapped preschoolers are being integrated into programs of all kinds: Head Start, day care, model demonstration projects, and programs previously for handicapped children. Interestingly enough, the emphasis on preschoolers is a downward extension of mainstreaming for older children, and springs from many of the same concerns (Macmillan, 1973).

Professionals are aware of the negative reactions to issues such as labelling and placement practices, as well as disenchantment with present-day self-contained special education classes (Birch, 1974). However, a positively oriented rationale in support of the integration process must be examined.
must be examined.

One aspect of this positive conception involves the increased understanding and sensitivity to individual differences that may develop out of involvement with handicapped children on the part of non-handicapped children, their parents, and their teachers. A second positive aspect, not often addressed, concerns the benefits to teachers arising from the opportunity to observe mixed groups of children, specifically at the preschool level (Guralnick, 1976). "Integrated classrooms provide teachers with a ready framework for gauging child behaviors within a developmental context." (p. 237)

The third aspect deals with the benefits available to the handicapped child when he is given opportunity to observe and interact with more advanced peers. This may be evidenced through an increased frequency and complexity of verbalizations and a higher

quality of play as a result of modeling and peer reinforcement (Guralnick, 1976).

The Normalization Principle

Mainstreaming refers to the practice of placing handicapped children in normal educational settings (Neisworth & Madle, 1975). Normalization can be defined as "utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviors and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (Wolfensberger, 1973, p. 28). Therefore, the principle of normalization gives argument against special classes, teachers, buildings, or any other extraordinary arrangements for special children. This concept, reiterated, is important because of the implications for day care. Following the principle of normalization, day care programming means providing nonsegregated, same, or similar facilities and activities for children with developmental difficulties (Neisworth & Madle, 1975).

It means that day care personnel should be less concerned with differential treatment of atypical youngsters and more focused on how all children can benefit from the same activities and events. (p. 164)

Neisworth and Madle (1975) provided several outstanding advantages related to a normalized approach to day care:

1. Children with developmental difficulties benefit from modeling by their normal peers.
2. Parents of normal children learn tolerance for those with deviations, and learn of the uniqueness of each child.
3. Lowered expectations of children may contribute to creating abnormal behaviors when handicapped children are segregated.
4. Day care normalization reduces stress upon the child, and places the responsibility for enhancing development on programming and on society in general.
5. The vast capabilities of a mixed group of children converts lip service about individualization into action.
6. In addition to developmental efficiency, integration is advantageous from a cost benefit point of view. It is cheaper to work with handicapped and normal children in the same setting.

Children in Day Care with Learning Handicaps

Of the handicaps present among children eligible for day care, problems in learning and communication comprise the largest group (Dunn, 1959). Estimates vary, but Neisworth and Madle (1975) suggested that 10 to 15 percent of children have some sort of learning problem which requires help. In the past, mental retardation and emotional disturbance were considered discrete conditions. The current view, however, is that a continuum exist; that is, a handicap is not present or absent (Neisworth & Madle, 1975; Lorr, 1961). There are a wide range of abilities, and a distinction between normal and abnormal is very difficult. Even children considered normal may display a delay in one or several areas of functioning.

Whatever the level of severity, children with learning problems require more time and effort to learn. 'The things a normal three-year-old can do become developmental goals for some four-, five-, and six-year olds and even older children" (Smith & Neisworth, 1975).

Zigler (1967) concluded that children who are delayed in learning also frequently have problems in motor coordination, speech and language weaknesses, and perhaps social maladjustments. Even children who have physical handicaps may adjust to and function well in day care settings with fewer special arrangements than was previously advocated (Brubeck & Vanston, 1974).

Programming for Developmentally Delayed Children

Since the mentally handicapped child is similar to a normal child but moves through the course of development at a slower rate, it is possible for the day care teacher to program effective activities for each handicapped child. To accomplish this, Neisworth and Madle (1975) offered a five-step process to be employed. It is an adaptation and variation of one used in working with normal children. The process consists of (1) assessment of the child's developmental level, (2) the selection of teaching materials appropriate to that level, (3) modification of materials and methods to optimize learning, (4) continuous evaluation of the child's progress, and (5) revision of the teaching methods on the basis of evaluation.

When considering modification of materials, Lindsley (1964) offered three aspects of materials and methods to be examined:

(a) materials themselves (stimuli), (b) the actions required of the child (responses), and (c) the outcome of the child's actions (consequences).

Concerning day care stimulation, several points which may be of interest: day care personnel should take note of the need to be as concrete and as tangible as possible, to exaggerate the intended stimulation and slow down the rate of verbal instruction to achieve emphasis, to repeat the stimulation, and to involve several senses rather than only one (Neisworth & Madle, 1975)

More primitive levels of consequences may be required when working with the mentally handicapped child than with a normal child of the same developmental level. The day care teacher may need to use food, toys, or contingent activities in teaching these children (Kazdin, 1975).

Several recommendations for working with developmentally delayed and/or mentally handicapped children exist. These suggestions may be readily incorporated into day care programs and will require minimal staff training. In the future, day care staff can anticipate enrolling and promoting the progress of ever increasing numbers of handicapped children, especially those who are developmentally delayed (Neisworth & Madle, 1975). Normalized day care is a humanizing effort to provide the best care for children who need and deserve it.

Social Interaction in the Integrated Preschool

Thus far, this paper has given a positive rationale for the practice of preschool mainstreaming. In the following pages, an attempt will be

made to review some existing research concerning the evaluation of behaviors observed and examined in preschool settings where handicapped and nonhandicapped children have been integrated.

It seems that within contemporary research, social interaction was the variable most commonly examined. The ease with which play behaviors may be observed, recorded, and documented may explain this tendency in the attempt to measure the success of preschool integration.

In a study conducted by Devoney, Guralnick, and Rubin (1974), the conditions that facilitate various types of play and their relationship to cognitive and social development were explored. Efforts were made to increase the social play of a varied group of handicapped preschool children.

Seven handicapped children enrolled in a private preschool made up the sample. The children ranged from those with little functional speech to those with considerable verbal skills.

Initially, the play situation was structured in a manner designed to increase the likelihood of play interactions and to reinforce any increased or more highly developed play by means of teacher intervention. However, these techniques rendered little change in behavior. Therefore, a preschool class of nonhandicapped children in a room next door was employed to send five of their children three times a week to interact with the handicapped children during free play period. The purpose of the endeavor was to attempt to use the nonhandicapped children to prompt more advanced and frequent play.

Rather than the teachers, the nonhandicapped children would provide the positive consequences that would attend this type of activity (Devoney, Guralnick, & Rubin, 1974).

The children were rated by time sampling with a social play scale ranging from isolated play to cooperative play. Teachers carried out the ratings.

During the first phase, the handicapped children played as usual. In the next phase (intervention), the nonhandicapped children were introduced. Social play did improve. In the final phase, when the teacher intervened in the play situation of the combined groups of children there was a noticeable increase in play. In the situation where the teacher intervened in the play of the handicapped children alone, only small positive changes resulted.

In summary, the play modeled by the handicapped children resulted in more sophisticated and organized play on the part of the handicapped children than had ever been evidenced before. The results of this investigation suggest that "nonhandicapped preschool children can serve as effective models for play behavior and produce a substantial and rapid increase in both the quantity and quality of play in handicapped children" (Devoney, Guralnick, & Rubin, 1974).

Peterson and Haralick (1977) also conducted a study in an experimental, integrated preschool setting for handicapped and nonhandicapped children located at the University of Kansas. The unique feature of this study was the fact that the program was one of reverse mainstreaming (designed for handicapped and nonhandicapped children introduced into the setting).

Social interactions were again observed during free play sessions. Subjects included five children enrolled in a handicapped program and eight handicapped children.

Play data and social interaction were collected during two 30-minute free play sessions each day for 18 days (Peterson & Haralick, 1977). Results indicated true social integration of the two groups, although there was some discrimination on the part of nonhandicapped children in favor of other nonhandicapped children. More specifically, results indicated that nonhandicapped children "chose to play with their handicapped peers in slightly over half (51.9 percent) of the 1322 total nonisolate free play observations" (these included both parallel and cooperative play observations) (Peterson & Haralick, 1977, p. 239).

In contrast, in 70.6 percent of the nonisolate play observations, the nonhandicapped children were observed engaging in play with other nonhandicapped children, either singly or in combination with handicapped children. Specifically, the nonhandicapped children play only with each other in 48.1 percent of the play observations, and in mixed groups in 22.5 percent of the observations.

Peterson and Haralick (1977) stated that these results suggest that even though the nonhandicapped tended to play with each other to a somewhat greater degree, there was indeed social integration of the handicapped peers as evidenced by their participation in over half of the nonisolate play interactions. The only difference between the two sexes was that the boys were three times more likely than

were the girls to play cooperatively if the handicapped children were the only playmates available to them.

In conclusion, it seems that nonhandicapped preschool children can indeed serve as effective models for their handicapped playmates. These same nonhandicapped children also have the potential to produce a substantial and rapid increase in the quantity and quality of handicapped children's play. Although some discrimination on the part of nonhandicapped preschoolers exists (as would be expected), evidence seems to indicate that some positive social interaction does occur.

Favorable effects on the handicapped child do tend to result from integration. Research has not as yet been extensive enough to argue from a totally objective perspective. However, even limited evidence that preschool mainstreaming is advantageous to the handicapped child is enough to render the implementation of the practice mandatory for the well-being of our children today and in the future.

Research Focusing on Parents

Although no previous research exists examining parental satisfaction with preschool programming and/or curriculum, the following portion of the review of literature discusses empirical research dealing with a researcher's approach to the evaluation of intervention programs, the evaluation of such programs by parents as measured by the degree of consonance between parents and staff on child-rearing attitudes and values, and the extent of parental endorsement of behavioral objectives incorporated in an early intervention program.

Early Intervention

Early intervention or preschool programming refers to programs originated for mentally handicapped children from birth to prekindergarten age.

The concept of early intervention is an umbrella encompassing a multitude of terms: high-risk infants, developmentally delayed; environmentally impoverished; cultural-familial retardation; mildly, moderately, or severely mentally retarded or handicapped. These early intervention programs may be home-based, center-based, or classified as special services, and they may be located in special day care centers, early childhood education centers, child development centers or special education centers operated by county agencies, with many being federally funded (Blacher-Dixon, 1979; Weiner, 1973).

Program Evaluation

In an effort to evaluate Head Start programs, researchers asked the question,

To what extent does a handicapped child's enrollment in Head Start affect his/her parents' attitudes toward and involvement in the child's program of services? (Vogel, 1978, p. 7)

Data from three different foci were collected to answer this question: (a) parental attitudes toward the practice of mainstreaming, (b) parental involvement in program activities as judged by program staff, and (c) parent/child interactions and activities in the home. Vogel (1978) reported that most Head Start parents expressed attitudes supportive of the program's efforts to meet the needs of their children.

How these variables related to intended outcomes was not an element of consideration in the context of Vogel's (1978) study.

Also not included was the examination of parental satisfaction with children's progress within the curriculum content--an aspect which will be examined in the forthcoming research.

Vogel (1978) emphasized that before attempting the evaluation of any program, it is imperative to be aware of, and to keep in mind, the intended outcomes of the program and the variables, programmatic and nonprogrammatic, that may influence these outcomes. He deemed it necessary to bear several considerations in mind when involved in an evaluation project. Vogel's (1978) premise was first, that researchers should follow an educational research model by taking into consideration the effect of family, community, and individual child characteristics when assessing program impact on children; second, progress with handicapped children is greatly a function of consistency and repetition of intervention and remediation strategies. Programs for preschool children must go beyond the classroom and also be supported and reinforced in the home. Cansler and Martin (1973) stated that "in order to provide the best climate and training for the handicapped child, it is imperative that parents' involvement be sought, cultivated, and acknowledged as extremely valuable" (p. 19). Consequently, the evaluation process must go beyond demographic considerations and socioeconomic status and instead focus on parental participation in and attitudes toward their child's program of services.

Third, the program's effectiveness also depends on the degree to which staff and administrators are committed to a child's development.

This commitment transcends specific teaching strategies and classroom structures.

The fourth evaluation guideline pertained to the nature of the outcome measures to be considered. Vogel (1978) felt that summative evaluations of preschool programs have narrowly focused on cognitive growth as the outcome of interest. This emphasis ignores outcomes that may be more significant over the long run (self-esteem, socio-emotional development, communication skills). Therefore, evaluation should be multidimensional and applicable to many educational objectives. Vogel's (1978) concerns were shared in the inception of the forthcoming proposed research focusing on parents.

Evaluation of Behavioral Objectives in Preschool Programs

An interesting approach to the examination of parental attitudes toward preschool programs was executed by Elardo and Caldwell (1973). They sought to determine whether values that conflict with those of the children's racial and cultural groups were being imposed on the children in an intervention program. The research questions they operationalized were as follows:

1. To what extent do parents endorse the behavioral objectives that guide the introduction of teaching-learning activities in an early intervention program?
2. Is there general agreement between professionals and para-professionals working in child development centers on the merits of behavioral objectives formulated for the children? (p. 8)

Items were selected from a list of 265 developmental objectives used to guide teaching activities at the Center for Early Development and Education. The areas of personal-social attributes, communication

skills, motor skills, cognitive skills, and perceptual skills were represented in the total list of objectives.

Data were collected through the use of an interview format. Subjects heard behavioral objectives read aloud and were asked whether or not they thought the objective was a good one--answering "Yes," "No," or "Not sure" (Elardo & Caldwell, 1973).

Interviews were conducted with 44 parents of preschoolers in inner-city intervention programs, 27 teachers, and 37 teacher aides. Nearly all subjects were female and resided in the Little Rock, Arkansas area.

Results indicated that the percentage of parents endorsing the items was slightly higher than those for teachers or aides. The data also revealed that there were not large discrepancies between what the teachers were trying to accomplish with the children and what the parents actually wanted the children to achieve (Elardo & Caldwell, 1973).

In discussion of the findings, Elardo and Caldwell (1973) concluded that

parents, teachers, and aides participating in our own and in similar intervention projects in the Little Rock area for the most part share the same objectives and goals for their children as do the people who plan the intervention programs. Parents in general were even more accepting of program objectives than were teachers working in the programs. (p. 12)

Value Consonance

A goal of many preschool programs is to produce a positive change in parental child-rearing attitudes through several intervention

strategies including parental support programs and individual parental counseling (Haynes, 1976). The strategies are used both in the home and at the program center (Lillie, 1972; Taylor, 1976). "The goal of positive change is based on the assumption that favorable attitudes will ultimately enhance the development of children" (Barsch, 1968, p. 175). To determine whether this goal is being met, evaluations of preschool programs should measure the extent to which changes in parental attitudes do, in fact, occur. One such measure is the degree of consonance between parents and staff on child rearing attitudes and values. To date, however, such a measure has not been included in evaluation studies of preschool programs for developmentally disabled children and their families (Phillip, 1977).

Value consonance has received considerable attention by researchers in the area of early childhood, namely Head Start and day care (Bee, Streissguth, Van Egeren, Leckie, & Nyman, 1970; Elardo & Caldwell, 1973; Horner, 1977). These studies discussed the charge that program staff from middle-class backgrounds impose alien child-rearing values on children and families of lower-class backgrounds. These researchers found that there were no objective differences in child-rearing values between parents and staff in early childhood programs; however, Horner (1977) found that parents did subjectively perceive differences to exist. He also stated that these value disagreements were not associated with parental dissatisfaction with day care.

Phillip (1980) investigated the degree of consonance between the program staff and the mothers of preschool children, using two variables: child rearing values and perceptions of the amount of program contact. It was suggested that mothers' perceptions of the amount of program contact may play an even more crucial role in program satisfaction than the objective reality of the number of contacts.

The extent to which mothers assess their own involvement in a program has almost never been examined, nor have disparities in such perceptions between mothers and staff been investigated. Discrepancies in perceptions of program contact could be related to the actual contact between mothers and staff. Therefore, staff may feel overworked or perceive mothers to be too demanding. In turn, mothers may feel underserved. Mothers' alienation from the program may occur when conflict is experienced by either group. This realization has serious implications due to the fact that once alienation occurs, Phillip (1980) stated, it is unlikely that the staff will be able to produce positive change in maternal child-rearing attitudes.

Although the study did not deal with parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming, in reference to perceptions of children's progress, it did focus on how consonance on the variables "child-rearing values" and perceptions of the amount of "program contact" played a role in maternal satisfaction with preschool programs. Phillip (1980) conjectured that the degree of program satisfaction should ultimately influence mothers' attitudes toward their

disabled children. Although the study did not focus on parental satisfaction with programming and curriculum components specifically; it did address value consonance.

The sample consisted of five preschool programs for developmentally disabled children in the San Francisco Bay area. The major thrust of the intervention strategies varied: two programs emphasized parent participation as an integral component of the care for the disabled child, and three programs intervened exclusively with the child, thus minimizing the parents' role in the treatment process.

Participants included 39 preschool staff and 32 mothers who were found to be comparable with regard to race and levels of education. Eighty-five percent of the mothers were white as was the majority of the staff. The children ranged in age from a few months to three years. Their disabilities ranged from very mild to severe physical and/or mental retardation.

To measure changes in maternal attitudes, a revised version of the Child-Rearing Practices Report (CRPR) (Block, 1965) was administered to mothers on two occasions, with a three-month interval between the two administrations. The CRPR is designed to measure parents' child-rearing attitudes, behaviors, goals, and feelings about their children.

The instrument consisted of 13 scales with four scales specifically developed to test dimensions of concern to mothers of developmentally disabled children. "Two examples are 'shame' and 'hope for the child's improvement'" (Phillip, 1980, p. 177)

The remaining nine scales dealt with issues applicable to all mothers. These included dimensions such as expression of affection toward the child, pleasure associated with maternal role, and early training of child.

In addition to the CRPR, brief interviews were conducted to encourage mothers to discuss their satisfactions and dissatisfactions with the programs. After data were collected on the mothers, staff members were instructed to respond to the CRPR according to how they would want an "ideal" mother in their program to respond. Therefore, information was available to determine the extent to which mothers met the staff's expectations, as well as vice versa.

Two forms were used to ascertain perceptions of mothers' level of program participation over the three-month study period. One form was administered to mothers and one to a "key staff member" (defined as a person primarily responsible for program development). Phillip (1980) measured "contact" as the number of face-to-face interactions and telephone communications between mother and staff.

"Do staff within any given preschool program for developmentally disabled children hold similar child-rearing objectives, as measured by the CRPR?" (Phillip, 1980), p. 178). In order to answer this question, the agreement on "ideal" mothers among the staff in all the programs was determined by interstaff correlations on all the items.

In summary, the results indicated that the staff's and the mothers' level of agreement on child-rearing values was relatively high. There was, however, a notable discrepancy between these groups' perceptions of the mothers' frequency of program contact.

This study supported previous research on value consonance in early childhood intervention programs; i.e., agreement existed between staff and parents of children in preschool intervention programs concerning child-rearing values and goals (Phillip, 1980). Elardo and Caldwell (1973) noted, "there is no massive discrepancy between what the teachers are trying to do with and for the children and what the parents want the children to achieve" (p. 9-10).

Phillip (1980) also concluded that even though parents and staff may agree on values, there still may be parental dissatisfaction with the programs. This dissatisfaction may manifest itself in regard to parents' reports of program contact as mentioned earlier. Phillip (1980) pointed out that perceptions of frequency of contact may be a more valid explanation of parental dissatisfaction with a preschool program than are perceived value disagreements between parents and staff.

Phillip (1980) felt that the amount of program contact was frequently overlooked in evaluation studies, and "may indeed be a critical indicator of mothers' dissatisfaction with preschool programs" (p. 182). Therefore, conflict or dissatisfaction may occur when teachers assume mothers are utilizing the program's services to capacity, yet mothers report very infrequent parent-teacher contact. Phillip (1980)

described such conflict to be of a critical nature in that mothers' dissatisfaction with the program may in turn minimize the program's overall effectiveness.

Studies Conducted by the Investigator

Research including parents as subjects evaluated programs in terms of value consonance between parents and program staff and/or parental endorsement of specific behavioral objectives. No studies were found in the existing body of literature which examined parental attitudes toward curriculum and programming. With this realization in mind, the investigator conducted a study which was an attempt to investigate the degrees of parental satisfaction with the curriculum and programming strategies in a special preschool education program. The following research question was asked:

Do the programming and curriculum strategies of the preschool program at Kendall Center relative to language skills, motor skills, cognitive skills, social skills, and self-help skills of the children from infancy to four years of age meet the expectations of the children's parents as measured by an attitude survey?
(Austin, 1982a)

The subjects in the previous study were 17 mothers whose children were enrolled in Kendall Center in Greensboro, North Carolina. The agency provided special education services to mentally handicapped children from early infancy to four years of age.

Mothers included in the study were from young families, ten of which had only one child, six families had two children, and only one family was composed of more than two (family of six children). Sixty-four percent of the children whose mothers responded had been enrolled in the program for more than one year.

The program was divided into three components: an infant program with services provided either monthly, bimonthly or weekly; a toddler program with services provided daily, and a preschool program which also operated on a daily basis. The sample included mothers of three infants, nine toddlers, and five preschoolers.

The instrument used in this study was the "Infant/Toddler/Preschool Questionnaire" (Austin, 1981b). It was an attitude survey focusing on the existing programming and curriculum components of language skills, cognitive skills, self-help skills, social skills and motor skills. Items also addressed were the attendance of parent-teacher meetings, quality of the meetings' contents, parents' willingness to discuss feelings with Kendall staff and suggestions for changes in the existing program. A group of 35 mothers whose children were enrolled in Kendall Center were involved in the evaluation process. Due to the small sample size and a low return rate, random sampling was not possible.

The "Infant/Toddler/Preschool Questionnaire" was designed to assess parental attitudes toward programming. It was reviewed by a staff member and permission for its distribution was obtained from the Director of Children's Services.

In order to form groups for the purpose of comparison, the psychologist/parent trainer was presented a list of 35 children's names. She was requested to assign each child into one of three groups: mildly, moderately, or severely mentally handicapped, based upon her professional familiarity with each case.

The analysis of data indicated that, for the most part, the mothers at Kendall Center were satisfied with programming--including the various curriculum components (language skills, self-help skills, motor skills, social skills, and cognitive skills) and the goals and activities which were being utilized to encourage the development of these skills.

Data were analyzed concerning three issues. The first examination sought to discover whether the parents as a whole were satisfied with programming. Then, data were analyzed to determine whether the parents were dissatisfied with any specific curriculum areas. Further analysis was conducted to discover whether differences existed in parental attitudes between the three groups (parents of mildly, moderately, and severely handicapped children).

Results were also examined to determine whether parents were satisfied with the quality of parent-teacher meetings, and whether parents felt free to discuss any discontent with the staff. When frequencies of positive ("satisfied") and negative ("dissatisfied") responses were computed, results were presented by tables in percentages.

In Table 1, a summary of the parental responses indicating degrees of satisfaction is presented. Note that these percentages are not computations of numbers of mothers responding positively or negatively, but instead are computations of responses falling in each of the choice categories on the questionnaire's Likert-type scale. Results indicated that 90 percent of the responses by mothers of mildly handicapped children were positive. Eighty-four percent of the positive

TABLE 1
Overall Responses from Mothers Indicating
Satisfaction with Curriculum
and Programming

	Percentage of Overall Response Marked "Not Satisfied" #1 & #2	Percentage of Unsure Res- ponses #3	Percentage of overall res- ponses marked as Satisfied #4 & #5
<hr/> Groups by Severity			
Mildly Handicapped	0	10	90
Moderately Handicapped	10	4	84
Severely Handicapped	0	13	85

Note: a) Mildly Handicapped Group n=6

Moderately Handicapped Group n=6

Severely Handicapped Group n=6

b) Percentages were derived from computations of response
frequencies from items 1-8.

responses by the parents in the moderately handicapped group were positive ones.

The data in Table 2 depict parental satisfaction with progress in each of the skills areas, the goals within these areas, and the parents' overall impression of the program. These percentages were computed by combining Likert Scale categories of #4 ("satisfied") and #5 ("very satisfied").

For the most part, the sample parents indicated high levels of satisfaction. As a matter of fact, 100 percent of the parents were satisfied

Table 2

Mothers Indicating Satisfaction with Programming
and Curriculum as Measured by
Combining Responses #4 and #5

	Mothers of Mildly Handi- capped	Mothers of Moderately Handicapped	Mothers of Severely Handicapped
Survey Questions	%	%	%
1. Progress in language skills	67	50	60
2. Progress in self-help skills	84	50	60
3. Progress in motor skills	100	84	100
4. Progress in social skills	100	100	100
5. Progress in cognitive skills	67	84	60
6. Satisfaction with long-term goals	100	100	100
7. Provision of activities goals	100	100	100
8. Overall impression of program	100	100	100

Note: Responses #4 and #5 have been combined.

with their child's progress in social skills. One hundred percent of the sample were also found to be satisfied with the long-term goals incorporated in the program, and the activities designed to meet these goals, and 100 percent conveyed their satisfaction with the program overall. These findings were impressive.

All of the mothers of mildly and severely handicapped children indicated their satisfaction with progress seen in motor skills. Since many of the severely mentally handicapped children were physically handicapped as well, this finding certainly indicated parental endorsement of the Kendall Center program.

When data were analyzed comparing the mildly handicapped and the severely handicapped groups, it was found that very little difference in amount of parental satisfaction existed. Overall, the results of the present study indicated that the mothers were indeed satisfied with the programming and curriculum at Kendall Center, and obviously felt that their expectations were being met. Furthermore, significant differences did not exist between the attitudes of parents from the mildly and severely handicapped groups.

The high degree of satisfaction of the parents may be explained in several ways. First, the parents were probably pleased to have an opportunity to place their child in a facility of this nature. They were aware that professionals in special education were there to help their child. Secondly, parental satisfaction may have been a result of the excellent quality of the staff. The researcher observed the staff in team meetings, with each team member outlining specific goals, and relating to each other what progress had occurred and what areas needed future attention. They not only gave lip service to goals and objectives, but were also observed engaging in activities to encourage the development of new skills. Thirdly, there seemed to be excellent rapport between the teachers and the parents who attended

both the team meetings and the parent-teacher meetings. The teachers and professional staff seemed warm and caring in their interactions with parents. This element of the program could certainly positively affect parents' attitudes.

The knowledge derived from this program evaluation may serve as confirmation to those who provide services that they are indeed fulfilling the expectations of the parents involved. Research of this nature has definite implications for both practitioners and for program planning. If results indicate that parents are not satisfied with their child's program, practitioners need to discover the "whys" of discontent, and proceed to make appropriate alterations. Also, a need for parent education may be implied for the purpose of decreasing unrealistic parent expectations.

The second study (Austin, 1982a) also dealt with parental satisfaction but did not include parents of handicapped children. Instead, the research was an attempt to assess parental satisfaction within a day care setting. Rather than a nonintegrated special school, the settings for this study were nonintegrated day care centers (all non-handicapped children). These two studies with very differing populations laid the foundations for the present proposed research to be outlined subsequently.

The sample used in the study consisted of 32 subjects, seventeen of whom were parents whose children were enrolled in Baynes' Happy Day Nursery in Greensboro, North Carolina. The facility provided day care services to children from early infancy to five years of age.

After-school care was also provided for children up to 12 years of age. The center was characteristic of a developmental day care facility, in that services exceeded those of mere custodial care. A preschool education program was incorporated with attention given to several areas of the child's development via the use of lesson plans and teacher-planned activities on a weekly and yearly basis. The center's philosophy was to "create an atmosphere that is warm, attractive, and inviting; and an environment that encourages the highest level of development in physical, mental, and social growth so they may attain their maximum potential in these areas" (Baynes' Happy Day Nursery, 1974).

The respondents were parents of 4- and 5-year-olds in a class of 26 children and a teacher's aid, with a student also at their disposal. The respondents from the nursery consisted of 16 mothers and one father, the majority of which were from white, middle-class families who had one or two children. Parents of 12 males and five females were included, and 85 percent of the group had attended the center for at least one year or more.

Fifteen subjects were parents whose children were enrolled in Carter Child Care Center on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The facility was one of four laboratory centers which were components of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations in the School of Home Economics. Day care services were provided to 4- and 5-year-olds. This center was also characteristic of a developmental day care facility and employed a curriculum based on Piaget's theories of cognitive development.

The philosophy stated: that

Within this framework, the program attends to the whole child while at the same time places major emphasis on cognitive development. The program will attend to developmental needs of the child in areas of social-emotional, motor and cognitive development. A major objective is that the child is happy with himself and the world around him (Carter Child Care Center, 1969).

A list of goals and objectives were outlined for each of the three developmental areas and attention was given to these over the school year via teacher-planned activities. Both the center's coordinator and university student teachers provided lesson plans on a weekly basis with yearly, long-term goals as the framework.

The Carter respondents were parents of 4- and 5-year-olds in a class of 19 children, with three teachers, two of whom were alternating graduate assistants; one or two student teachers, and work-study students were also at their disposal.

The Carter respondents consisted of 11 mothers and four fathers, the majority of whom were white, middle-to upper-middle-class families who had one or two children (only two families consisted of three children). Parents of eight males and seven females were included and 90 percent of the children had been enrolled in the center for a year.

The instrument used in the present study was the "Parental Satisfaction Survey" (Austin, 1982a). It was an attitude survey focusing on parents' satisfaction with curriculum and programming. Curriculum components addressed were language skills, motor skills, self-help skills, social skills and cognitive skills. Each skill area

was defined by giving examples of activities employed to foster the skill area. One group of items focused on the parents' perceptions of their roles in the childrens' preschool education at the centers. Another group of questions assessed parental awareness of the presence or absence of a preschool education component. And lastly, a group of items assessed the degree of satisfaction with the job the teachers were doing in each of the skill areas and the parents' attitudes toward the amount of progress observed in each area.

Parents were also given an opportunity to express their opinions concerning areas within the program which they felt needed improvement. Parents were also asked to rate their respective centers on a scale of 1 to 10 (poor to excellent).

The survey items were closed, with some questions requiring a response of "yes," "no," or "don't know, and the remaining questions being composed of a Likert Scale with responses ranging from "very unsatisfied" to "very satisfied." The questions referring to children's progress ranged from "none" to "very much."

Questionnaires were distributed to 26 parents at Baynes' Happy Day Nursery. Seventeen questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 65 percent return rate. An 80 percent return rate was obtained from Carter Center with 15 questionnaires returned from a sample of 19 parents. Due to the small sample size, random sampling was not possible, and all questionnaires returned were used in the analysis.

Analysis of the data indicated that parents of both Baynes' Happy Day Nursery and Carter Child Care center were satisfied with the curriculum and programming strategies employed by their children's preschool programs. In fact, 100 percent of the Baynes' Nursery were satisfied with the overall care their children received, and 94 percent were satisfied with the preschool education program. Very similar results were obtained from the Carter Center parents in that 100 percent were satisfied with overall care, and 93 percent displayed satisfaction with the preschool education program.

The data were analyzed concerning several issues. The first examination sought to determine whether the parents perceived themselves to possess a significant role within the center's structure. A second analysis was performed to determine parental awareness of the existence of a preschool education program in reference to each of the skills areas. Further analysis was conducted determining satisfaction with the job the teachers were doing. Parental satisfaction with progress in skill areas was examined, and finally, the two groups were compared to determine whether differences in attitudes existed.

In Table 3 is a summary of parents' responses to several questions addressing parents' perceptions of their roles within the day care center's structure, i.e., their perceived capacity to cause change through the expression of dissatisfaction. The data indicated that the Baynes' parents thought the teachers were concerned with parental attitudes (90 percent responded "yes, teachers are concerned"). One hundred percent said they would voice dissatisfaction, and over

TABLE 3
Parents' Perceptions of Their Role in Day Care
Represented in Percentages

	BAYNES'			CARTER		
	N=17			N=15		
	Y	DK	N	Y	DK	N
13. Are teachers concerned with your opinion	90	10	0	67	26	7
14. Do your opinions have an effect	77	17	6	67	26	7
15. Have you ever been asked if you are satisfied	22	0	78	40	7	53
16. Would you like to have opportunity to express opinions	84	10	6	80	7	13
17. If dissatisfied, would you say so	100	0	0	93	0	7
18. Would changes be made for you	60	28	12	80	13	7
19. Do you converse with teachers	100	0	0	100	0	0
20. Are teachers friendly	100	0	0	100	0	0
21. Is child happy	100	0	0	100	0	0
23. Are you given written progress reports	10	0	90	7	0	93
23. Are you given oral reports	88	0	12	93	0	7

NOTE: Y = YES N = NO DK = DO NOT KNOW

one half of this group thought changes would occur as a result of their discontent. The entire sample indicated that they conversed with the teachers, they found the teachers to be friendly, and they thought their child was happy at the nursery. As the investigator predicted, a large proportion of the sample (78 percent) reported that they had never been asked if they were satisfied. This result was not interpreted as a negative reflection, however, but instead was considered a typical oversight on the part of well-meaning staff. Perhaps the fact that a child remains in a program is considered to be an indication of parental satisfaction. The responses of the Carter Center Parents were very similar to those of the Baynes Nursery parents. All the parents except one said they would voice dissatisfaction, and 80 percent felt that changes would be made to satisfy them.

One hundred percent of Carter parents indicated that they conversed with teachers, found the teachers to be friendly, and thought their child was happy at the center. In Table 3 responses indicated that a few more parents at Carter Center were uncertain about the role of their attitudes toward the program.

Table 4 depicts parental awareness of curriculum components employed by the two programs. The degree of parental awareness was impressive in both groups. When asked about the provision of lesson plans and activities to help their children progress in each of the skills areas, almost all the items yielded over 80 percent of both groups of parents saying "yes," they thought the teachers were providing such curriculum components.

Table 4
 Parents' Perceptions of Preschool Education Program
 Represented in Percentage

SURVEY QUESTIONS	BAYNES'			CARTER		
	N=17			N=15		
	Y	DK	N	Y	DK	N
24. Do teachers have goals and objectives	88	6	6	86	7	7
27. Do teachers have lesson plans for motor skills	71	29	0	86	14	0
30. Do teachers have lesson plans for language skills	88	12	0	86	14	0
33. Attention given to self-help skills	100	0	0	93	0	7
35. Is attention given to social skills	83	17	0	100	0	0
38. Are activities planned for cognitive skills	94	6	0	86	7	7

NOTE: Y = YES N = NO DK = DO NOT KNOW

As depicted in table 5 when asked how satisfied they were with goals, activities, and the job the teachers were doing in each of the skills areas, the results were overwhelming. Only one parent, a father, displayed any dissatisfaction at the Carter Center (both of the "U" responses were from the same parent). No "unsatisfied" responses were obtained from the Baynes' Nursery parents.

When asked how much progress they had seen in motor, language, social, and cognitive skills, almost all of the nursery parents responses having seen "very little" progress, and this response was in the area of motor skills. The Carter Center parents were also very positive with only two parents reporting "very little" progress seen. These responses were in the areas of language and social skills. Eighty percent of the Carter parents had seen "much" to "very much" progress in their child's language and cognitive skills, and over 80 percent of the nursery parents had seen "much" to "very much" progress in their child's language and cognitive skills. These impressive results seemed to indicate that the parents of both groups felt the day care centers to be fulfilling their preschool education goals, and were, therefore, quite satisfied. In fact, as depicted in Table 5, 94 percent of the Carter parents responded that they were "satisfied" to "very satisfied" with the preschool education program.

When the parents of the Carter Center were asked which areas within the program needed improvement, the results were as follows: almost 70 percent (N=10) of the parents indicated that "no changes

TABLE 5
 Parents' Indicating Satisfaction with
 Programming and Curriculum
 Measured by Percentage of Parents Responding

SURVEY QUESTIONS	BAYNES'			CARTER		
	N=17			N=15		
	VU & U #1 & 2	NS #3	S & VS #4 & 5	VU & U #1 & 2	NS #3	S & VS #4 & 5
25. Satisfied with goals	0	18	82	0	7	93
26. Satisfied with activities	0	12	88	0	14	86
28. Satisfied with teacher's job in motor skills	0	18	82	7	7	86
31. Satisfied with teacher's job in language skills	0	0	100	0	7	93
34. Satisfied with progress in self-help skills	0	6	94	0	7	93
36. Satisfied with progress in social skills	0	6	94	0	7	93
39. Satisfied with progress in cognitive skills	0	6	94	0	14	86
41. Satisfied with overall care received	0	0	100	0	0	100
42. Satisfied with preschool education program	0	6	94	7	0	93

NOTE: VU = VERY UNSATISFIED U = UNSATISFIED
 NS = NOT SURE S = SATISFIED VS = VERY SATISFIED

were necessary." The other five parents asked that more attention be given to social, motor, or self-help skills. When asked to rate the center, 93 percent gave a rating of either 9 or 10.

When the parents of the children attending Baynes' Nursery were asked for areas needing improvement, the results were as follows: 60 percent (N=10) of the parents said no changes were necessary. The other 30 percent (N=7) asked that more attention be given to cognitive skills, self-help skills, and parent-teacher interactions. Eighty-five percent gave ratings of 9 or 10.

Overall, the results of the study indicated that parents of both the day care centers were satisfied with curriculum and programming, and obviously felt that their expectations were being met. Furthermore, significant differences did not exist between the attitudes (or degrees of satisfaction) of the parents at Baynes Nursery and Carter Center.

The high degree of parental satisfaction may be explained in several ways. Both centers are well-known facilities in Greensboro which have been in operation for several years. Their much-worked-for reputations have earned them waiting lists of parents referred to them by pediatricians, obstetricians, child developmentalists, and other professionals as well as previous patrons who consider them to be quality programs.

The investigator visited both programs on several occasions. The director and teachers at Baynes as well as the coordinator and teachers at Carter were always receptive and displayed an obvious

affection for children and genuine interest in their development. It was obvious that parents were likewise impressed.

The investigator was also aware before the questionnaires were distributed that both programs utilized concepts of child development and provided curriculum which focused on all developmental areas with a structured program having the child's optimal development as their goal. For these reasons, the two centers were considered quality programs and the high degree of parental satisfaction was not surprising.

The roles which parents play as part of the family unit make them an integral component in the preschool education process, and their assistance and support of the program is vital for the provision of continuity for the developing child.

These two studies which focused on parental satisfaction seemed to indicate the following: (a) the parents of handicapped preschoolers in a nonintegrated special school were indeed satisfied with curriculum and programming, as well as progress observed in their children; (b) the parents of nonhandicapped preschoolers in a nonintegrated day care center were also satisfied with curriculum and programming and with the progress observed. With the insights gained from the results of these studies, it was the purpose of the forthcoming study to assess parental satisfaction within a group of parents whose handicapped preschoolers were being mainstreamed in preschool programs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The present study was an investigation focusing on the attitudes of parents whose handicapped preschoolers were enrolled in the Guilford County Head Start Program. The purpose of the study was threefold:

1. It provided the parents with an opportunity not previously afforded to evaluate their children's programs;
2. It was designed to determine parental satisfaction with pre-school mainstreaming as measured by the following variables:
 - a. parents' perceptions of their role within the center programs
 - b. parents' opinions concerning the existence of an educational programs containing various curriculum components
 - c. parents' satisfaction with curriculum and programming in the different centers
 - d. the amount of progress parents had observed in the various developmental skills
 - e. parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming
3. It provided information to the participating programs regarding the attitudes of the parents they served. Knowledge gained from the study may serve as a basis for future modifications within these programs.

The procedures employed to achieve the purposes of study were a) the selection of a design, b) the identification of a target population, c) the development of a data collection instrument, d) the administration of the instrument, e) the analysis of the responses, f) discussion of the results, and e) the investigators' evaluation of the final methodology for the purpose of outlining necessary improvements.

Design

The research design employed was a descriptive or self report design. It was not the intent of the investigator to manipulate variables or to introduce a control group as is typical of experimental research.

The aim of the design was simply to describe what existed with respect to the variables outlined. In conjunction with the purpose of this study, a descriptive self-report design enabled one to determine the current attitudes of the parents of preschoolers who were being mainstreamed.

Variables

The independent variables under investigation were a) parents' perceptions of their role within the center program, b) parents' opinions concerning the existence of an educational program containing various curriculum components, c) parents' satisfaction with curriculum and programming, d) the amount of progress parents had observed in the various developmental skills, and e) parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming.

The investigator believed that these variables related to and affected each other in such a way that their interrelationship would be useful in determining overall parental satisfaction. As conveyed in the introduction chapter, the parental satisfaction was operationally defined as follows:

With respect to parents' responses obtained from an attitude survey, it was assumed that parents who perceived themselves to possess a significant role within the center program who were also under the opinion that a preschool education program existed, containing several curriculum components, who were satisfied with the job teachers were doing in reference to curriculum and programming, and who had observed progress in the various developmental skills areas, were more satisfied than parents who were negative in several of these expressions. It was also conjectured that an examination of the fifth variable, parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming, could also provide insights in the interpretation of parental satisfaction.

The instrument used in the present study is composed of groups of questions which focus on each of the respective variables. The following examples are given to provide clarity to the assumptions surrounding the measurement of each variable underlined.

1. Parents' perceptions of their role within the center program

With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who believed their opinions to have an effect on the way the center was operated, perceived themselves to possess a more significant role than parents who gave a negative response.

2. Parents' opinions concerning the existence of an educational program containing various curriculum components.

With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who believed that the teachers had goals and objectives for their child's preschool education, were more satisfied than parents who responded negatively.

3. Parents' satisfaction with curriculum and programming

With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who were satisfied with the job teachers were doing in several of the curriculum and programming areas, were more satisfied than parents who expressed dissatisfaction in several of these areas.

4. The amount of progress parents had observed in various developmental skills

With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who had observed some progress in several of the developmental skills areas were more satisfied than parents who had not observed progress in several skills.

5. Parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming

This was measured by parents' responses to open-ended questions asking for the definition of six terms. The criterion for acceptability of each response was the ability to provide an accurate definition, no matter how simplistic.

Development of the Instrument

The instrument utilized in the present study was entitled "Parental Satisfaction Survey" (Austin, 1983) (see Appendix).

It was developed as an adaptation of two other instruments designed by the investigator; they were the "Infant/Toddler/Preschool Questoinnaire" (Austin, 1981b) and the "Parental Satisfaction Survey" (Austin, 1982b). It consists of 50 items and contains nine sections.

The first section, items 1-11, focuses on parents' perceptions of their role within the center program. Subjects were provided a dichotomous choice of a "yes" or "no" response.

The next section was designed to gather information concerning parents' beliefs regarding the existence of an educational program containing various curriculum components, and contains items 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 32. These items provide dichotomous response choices as in the first section.

The third section focuses on parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming and includes items 13, 14, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 33, 34, 35, composed of Likert-type scales. Each item is presented in the form of a question and rated on a four-point scale. The points are Very Unsatisfied, Unsatisfied, Satisfied, to Very Satisfied. The respondents were asked to circle the choice which best described their feeling about the particular curriculum or programming component addressed. Characteristically, when a Likert-type scale is used, responses are scaled through the use of sums or averages of individual responses, and the intensity of attitudes is determined through the summation of ratings (Guilford, 1954). Therefore, varying degrees of satisfaction can be discerned. This same data collection strategy was employed in the next section of questions focusing on the amount of progress parents had observed.

In the fourth section, respondents were requested to indicate the amount of progress they had observed in several of their child's developmental skills. As previously mentioned, a Likert-type scale is presented with response choices None, Some, Much, to Very Much. Items included in this section are 17, 20, 23, 26, 29.

Section five is composed of six open-ended items which required the definitions of six terms relative to mainstreaming, as follows: Individual Education Program (I.E.P.) Conference, Team Meeting, Mainstreaming, Resource Teacher, Public Law 94-142, and Handicapped Coordinator. Responses were analyzed in terms of three possible categories of responses: (a) No Response, (b) Incorrect Response, and (c) Response which indicated familiarity with, or an understanding of the term in question. The criterion for acceptability of a response was the accuracy of the definition, no matter how simplistic.

The sixth section contains an open-ended item, item 36, which asks the parents what changes they would like to see in their child's center. Parents responses were reported in the form of a discussion. Section seven consists of one item. It asks the parents to rate their child's center on a scale of 1 to 10 with "1" meaning "poor" and "10" meaning "excellent." Item 38, which focuses on the amount or type of instruction parents had received in the area of preschool mainstreaming is contained in section eight. Six choice categories are presented representing various types of experiences. The final section of the instrument was designed to gather demographic data. Items 45 through 50 are contained within this section.

Selection of Subjects

Limitations. The original intent of the present study was to utilize parents of handicapped children in day care encompassing commercial, private, and federally funded programs. However, so few children (7) were located within the commercial and private programs so that their exclusion from the anticipated population was mandatory. The low enrollment of handicapped children within these types of centers was probably due to the presence of a special, federally funded preschool, Kendall Center, which served a great portion of the handicapped children in the area. It was also expected that the handicapping conditions among the Head Start children involved would be relatively mild in that the more severely handicapped children in the geographical area were enrolled in Kendall Center.

Additional limitations arose with the inability to secure the identity of the entire population of parents whose children were being mainstreamed. The agency involved stressed the importance of confidentiality within the program's structure. However, after reconsideration, the agency agreed upon the release of names and addresses of parents whose permission for such release could be obtained by the parent coordinator. As a result, the investigator was supplied with a list of 33 names and addresses from the total 48 parents in the population.

Subjects. With such a small number in the target population (48), it was imperative that as many surveys as possible be collected.

The attempt to include as many of the identified subjects as possible defined the study as a census. Therefore, the data obtained could only be discussed in terms of a specific group of parents at a single point in time, hence, disallowing generalizability outside the sample polled. It was determined that due to the small population of parents of handicapped children (48) within the county, the method most conducive to the collection of the largest number of surveys would be a personal interview approach.

The "handicapped coordinator" provided the following breakdown of handicapping conditions which existed among the children: 37 speech/language impaired, seven health and developmentally impaired, one physically handicapped, two emotionally disturbed, and one mentally handicapped.

It was surprising that over three-fourths (77 percent) of the handicapped children were classified as speech and language impaired. This may be explained by the presence of a full-time speech therapist who was available for testing. Also, the absence of larger numbers of more severely handicapped children could have been the result of the placement of those children in a special self-contained preschool in the same geographic area.

The subjects included in the study were 27 mothers, two grandmothers, and one guardian with the majority of the group being married (60 percent). The remaining 40 percent (12) classified themselves as single, in that a "divorced" category was excluded to avoid potential offensiveness.

The children of the respondents were 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds with each age group containing 1, 11, and 18 respectively. Seventeen (57) percent of these children had been enrolled for only one year, and 13 (43 percent) had been involved in Head Start for two years.

Eighty percent (24) of the participating parents were members of families containing from one to three children. The remaining six families contained from four to six children.

Data Collection Procedures

Permission to conduct this research was granted from the program's director and policy council. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the local agency's concern for confidentiality prohibited the initial accessibility of a list of parents' names and addresses, therefore, before the list was released, various strategies were employed.

It was hoped that the investigator's attendance of two scheduled parent meetings would generate a substantial number of parents responding to the surveys during those meetings. However, one meeting was cancelled and the other was comprised of only eight parents of handicapped preschoolers. These factors necessitated the development of more productive strategies.

A second approach was the investigator's attendance of the annual parent-staff picnic, at which time the staff discretely pointed out parents of special children. This procedure resulted in the collection of two completed surveys.

The third strategy was the procurement of assistance from the speech therapist. Surveys were administered to parents who brought their child to therapy sessions. Respondents filled out surveys while the children worked with the therapist. The result was the collection of five additional surveys.

The fourth procedure was the administration of instruments to parents who were located as a result of the acquired list. This final procedure resulted in the collection of 15 additional surveys.

Analysis of Data

The data were compiled and subjected to descriptive analysis. The census design utilized in the study prohibited the use of inferential statistics. Percentages and response frequencies were computed and presented in table form.

Items were grouped on the basis of the variable being measured. Items which focused on parents' perceptions of their role within the center program were grouped, as were those dealing with parents' opinions concerning the existence of an educational program consisting of various curriculum components, parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming in the various centers, the amount of progress parents had observed in the various developmental skills, and parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming. Each of these groups of items was analyzed and discussed separately. Five tables were constructed to depict the resulting data for each of the variables under investigation.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The results of the present study were very similar to those the investigator expected. Basically, the results may be summarized as follows: 1) the parents seemed to perceive themselves to possess a significant role within the Head Start program; 2) a majority of the parents were of the opinion that a preschool education program containing various curriculum components was utilized; 3) parents reported a high degree of satisfaction with curriculum and programming; 4) a large percentage of parents had observed "much" to "very much" progress in the various skills areas; and, 5) very few parents were familiar with any of the terms relative to mainstreaming.

Data were analyzed via the examination of groups of questions which focused on each of the five variables. The following analysis was organized in subsections which consist of a descriptive analysis of the resulting data for each of the five variables under investigation. To reiterate, these were: a) parents' perceptions of their role within the Head Start program; b) parents' awareness of the existence of a preschool education program; c) parents' satisfaction with curriculum and programming; d) the amount of progress parents had observed in each of the various skills area (i.e., motor skills, language skills, self-help, social skills, and cognitive skills); and, e) parents' familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming.

The resulting data were presented in table form depicting percentages of parents' responses to the individual items within the survey.

Also included in the analysis is a discussion of additional items which concerned a) parents' ratings of the center, b) the amount of parental instruction in mainstreaming, and c) changes parents wished to see in their child's center.

Parents' Perceptions of Their Role Within the Preschool Program

Table 6 depicts parents' positive or negative responses to a group of questions which focused on the parents' perceptions of their role within the day care program.

Overall, the extremely high percentages of parents responding positively to almost all of the questions seemed to indicate that the parents perceived themselves to possess significant roles within their children's programs.

These questions were designed to discover what level of significance the parents felt themselves to have in terms of their opinions of the programs, staff requests for their input, their perceptions of the relative importance of their opinions, and their perceived ability to evoke change. Therefore, high percentages of parents responding positively ("yes") to this particular set of questions would seem to indicate a high degree of perceived significance on the part of responding parents.

TABLE 6

Parents' Perception of Their Role Within the
Preschool Program

<u>Questions</u>	<u>% Yes</u>	<u>% No</u>
1. Do you think the teachers are concerned with your opinion of the program?	100	-
2. Do you think parents' opinions have an effect on the way the center is operated?	90 (27)	10 (3)
3. Have you ever been asked by staff and/or director if you were satisfied with the services provided to you and your child?	93 (28)	7 (2)
4. Would you like the opportunity to tell teachers or director how you feel about the center?	83 (25)	17 (5)
5. If you were dissatisfied with something going on within the center, would you feel free to tell the staff?	97 (29)	3 (1)
6. If you answered "yes" to the preceding question, do you think changes would be made in an attempt to satisfy you?	73 (22)	27 (8)
7. Do you "visit" or have conversation with teachers upon arrival or when you pick up your child?	100	-
8. Are teachers open and friendly when you ask questions about the center?	97 (29)	3 (1)
9. Do you think your child is happy attending his/her center?	100	-
10. Do teachers give you a written progress report?	97 (26)	13 (4)
11. Do teachers give you an oral report of how your child is progressing	100	-
Total Responses	93%(306)	7%(24)

As depicted in Table 6, all items yielded very high percentages (73-100 percent) of parents responding positively. One hundred percent of the sample thought the teachers were concerned with their opinion of the program, and 90 percent of those parents thought their opinions had an effect on the way the center was operated. These results were most impressive. Furthermore, 93 percent (28) of the parents said they had been asked by the staff or director if they were satisfied with services provided to them and to their child. This finding was surprising to the investigator in that her own previous studies had rendered fewer parents who had been approached about their satisfaction with the program. The response to this item also seemed to indicate a genuine interest in the parents' attitudes, on the part of program staff at Head Start (whether it was from teachers or the parent coordinator) and that interest had obviously been conveyed to parents within the sample.

When asked if they would feel free to voice dissatisfaction to the staff, 97 percent responded "yes"; and 73 percent, almost three-fourths of the sample felt that their conveyed dissatisfaction would produce changes in an attempt to satisfy them. This finding seemed strong evidence of a high degree of perceived parental significance among this group, in that they obviously perceived themselves to possess the power to cause change.

The results of the aforementioned items could be interpreted to represent a certain degree of parental satisfaction in that feeling themselves an important part of the programs could certainly positively

affect attitudes toward that program. One hundred percent of the sample indicated that they had engaged in conversations with the teachers and 29 of those 30 parents expressed that the teachers had been open and friendly when asked questions about the centers. Again, this finding as in previous items, seemed to indicate an excellent rapport between parents and teachers. Furthermore, the parents obviously felt positive about their children's attitudes toward the various centers in that 100 percent thought their child was happy attending his/her center.

Although the data, thus far, have been interpreted in terms of a positive relationship between parents and teachers, it is also necessary to discuss the possible effects of the researcher's presence while parents completed surveys. The data, therefore, may be interpreted as the result of parents' hesitancy to respond negatively toward the center or staff while in the presence of the researcher. If so, that hesitancy may have been a function of either parental allegiance to the preschool centers or a fear of lack of anonymity. However, this interpretation seemed unlikely in that subjects were verbally encouraged to feel free to display dissatisfaction. Furthermore, they were assured of anonymity when instructed not to sign their names. Therefore, it was determined that interviewer presence had little, if any, effect on the subjects' responses.

Parents' Opinions Concerning the Existence of an Educational
Program Including Curriculum and Programming

Additional analysis was performed examining subjects' responses to questions which focused on the variable, "parental awareness of an education program or curriculum and programming." These items explored whether or not the parents were aware that teachers prepared lesson plans or provided activities which focused on each of several skills areas: motor, social language, self-help, and cognitive skills.

The Head Start program was designed to foster these skills through the use of educational objectives with activities and learning centers designed to promote growth in each of these developmental areas. However, the investigation sought to discover whether or not the parents were aware of the existence of such a program. This examination could lend insights into a) the amount of contact parents had with the center, and b) their awareness of the center's function as a developmental preschool program (rather than custodial). This component of the overall investigation seemed pertinent, in that the data produced seemed potentially important in contributing to a discussion of parental satisfaction. In other words, how important is parental awareness of curriculum and programming in explaining overall satisfaction?

The descriptive analysis of these particular items rendered some overwhelming results. In Table 7, a summary of the frequency of subjects responding to each of the three response categories is presented ("yes," "no," "don't know").

TABLE 7

Opinions of Parents in Reference to the Existence
of an Educational Program Including
Curriculum and Programming

<u>Questions</u>	<u>% Yes</u>	<u>% No</u>	<u>% Don't Know</u>
12. Do you think teachers have goals and objectives for your child's preschool education?	97 (29)	0	3 (1)
15. Do you think teachers use lesson plans or provide activities to help child progress in motor skills?	97 (29)	0	3 (1)
18. Do you think teachers plan activities to help your child progress in language skills?	93 (28)	7 (2)	0
21. Do you think teachers give attention to your child's self-help skills?	97 (29)	3 (1)	0
24. Do you think teachers give attention to your child's social skills?	100	-	-
27. Do you think teachers plan activities which focus on cognitive skills?	93 (28)	7 (2)	-
30. Do you think teachers make adjustments in program to fit your child's special needs?	83 (25)	10 (3)	7 (2)
32. Do you think staff has planned an education program specifically for your child to meet his/her special needs?	86 (26)	7 (2)	7 (2)
Total Responses	93 (244)	4 (10)	3 (6)

As depicted in table 7, for all of the eight items an overwhelmingly high percentage of subjects gave responses indicating they believed that teachers did make provisions for activities concentrating on each of the skills areas. When asked if they thought teachers had goals and objectives for their child's preschool education, 29 of the 30 parents responded "yes," with the remaining parent being unsure. This finding seemed an indication of either an extremely high level of parental awareness or knowledge of the program's function, or possibly it was an attempt to portray themselves as being knowledgeable. However, the second interpretation was unlikely for two reasons. First, the parent coordinator informed the researcher that an orientation -meeting had been held prior to the children's entrance into Head Start, at which time the parents were informed of the program's design, including a brief description of the educational component. Secondly, as parents of handicapped children, they were also exposed to periodic Individual Education Program (I.E.P.) meetings with the professional staff. These meetings presented them with an outline of their child's progress in each of the various skills areas and discussed future goals and objectives. Therefore, it was conjectured that the responses to this particular item were a function of the program contact.

Ninety-seven percent (29) of the sample parents thought the teachers used lesson plans to help their child progress in motor skills. The same proportion also thought the teachers gave attention to the children's self-help skills.

The two items concerning language and cognitive skills produced responses of 93 percent (28) of the parents indicating their belief in the existence of activities designed to promote these two skills. Social skills seemed to be the area of the least indecision, with the entire sample indicating the belief that provisions were made for giving attention to these skills.

In reference to the two items concerning special needs, again a large proportion of the parents were of the opinion that special provisions were being made. Eighty-three percent (25) thought teachers made adjustments in the program to fit their child's special needs; only three parents thought not, and two were unsure. With such small numbers responding in each of these two categories, it was not possible to discuss variables which may have influenced these subjects. The results of the items indicated that parents included in the study were of the opinion that a preschool education program containing various curriculum components was utilized.

Satisfaction with Curriculum and Programming

A third analysis of data was performed with a group of questions which focused on parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming, specifically how satisfied parents were with the "job teachers were doing" concerning each of the skills areas. These items were designed to investigate the parents' perception of and satisfaction with the teacher's role and performance. In planning the present study, it was hypothesized that parental satisfaction with curriculum and

programming was a variable which could greatly affect the concept of "satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming," the focal point of the study.

In conjunction with findings from the investigator's previous studies (Austin, 1981a; 1982a), it was conjectured that a significant percentage of parents would display satisfaction. However, the results of the data focusing on satisfaction with curriculum and programming rendered overwhelmingly high percentages of parents indicating "satisfaction" or "much satisfaction."

In Table 8, a summary of those results is presented. It was necessary to provide a table category for "No Response," labeled "NR" for subjects leaving answers blank. It should be noted that "NR" occurred for two of the items, "31" and "32," as a result of the type of question (e.g., "If you answered 'yes' to question 30..."). Therefore, those subjects falling within the nonrespondent category were ones who gave negative or unsure responses to questions "30" and "32" in Table 7. Those items concerned parental awareness of special provisions for the special needs children. (The remaining nonresponse was obtained for the item "13" which inquired about satisfaction with teachers' goals and objectives for the preschool education program.)

As depicted in Table 7, the question concerning program adjustment to meet special needs rendered three parents indicating they did not think such adjustments were made, and two parents were unsure. When asked if they thought an education program had been

TABLE 8
Parental Satisfaction with Curriculum
and Programming

<u>Items</u>	<u>% (VU)</u>	<u>% (U)</u>	<u>% (S)</u>	<u>% (VS)</u>	<u>% (NR)</u>
13. How satisfied are you with the teachers' <u>goals and objectives</u> for your child's preschool education?	-	-	33 (10) 97 (29)	64 (19)	3 (1)
14. How satisfied are you with the <u>activities</u> the teachers use to go along with their goals for your child?	3 (1)	-	33 (10)	64 (19)	-
16. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing in the area of <u>motor skills</u> ?	3 (1)	-	43 (13) 97 (29)	54 (16)	-
19. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's <u>language skills</u> ?	-	13 (4)	33 (10) 87 (26)	54 (16)	-
22. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's <u>self-help skills</u> ?	-	3 (1)	40 (12) 97 (29)	57 (17)	-
25. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's <u>social skills</u> ?	-	-	43 (13) 100	57 (17)	-
28. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing in helping your child grow and develop in the area of <u>cognitive skills</u> ?	6 (2)	6 (2)	40 (12) 87 (26)	47 (14)	-

TABLE 8
(continued)

<u>Items</u>	<u>%(VU)</u>	<u>%(U)</u>	<u>%(S)</u>	<u>%(VS)</u>	<u>%(NR)</u>
31. I fyou answered "yes" to question 30, how satisfied are you with the <u>special</u> <u>adjustments made</u> for your child in the classroom?	-	-	37 (11) 80 (24)	43 (13)	20 (6)
33. If you answered "yes" to question 32, how satisfied are you with the <u>special education program</u> planned for your child?	3 (1)	1	30 (9) 84 (25)	54 (16)	13 (4)
34. Overall, how do you feel about the <u>quality of caregiving</u> at the center?	3 (1)	-	27 (8) 97 (29)	70 (21)	-
35. Overall, how satisfied are you with the <u>preschool education program</u> ?	3 (1)	3 (1)	33 (10) 93 (28)	60 (18)	-
Total Responses	2%	2%	35%	57%	3%
	4%		93%		3%

planned specifically to meet their child's special needs, two parents thought not, and two displayed uncertainty.

These findings were somewhat distressing in that parents of handicapped children might be expected to be aware that special provisions were being made for their child's unique needs. Furthermore, it seemed that their attendance of I.E.P. meetings would connote such measures. However, an interpretation of such findings might be that these particular parents were under the impression that all children attended speech therapy or were provided with an I.E.P. made up of specific goals and objectives for the year. It is also conceivable that these parents did not perceive their children to be "special," hence, not requiring special provisions.

Overall, the sample parents responded very positively to all of the items addressing satisfaction with curriculum and programming with extremely high percentages (ranging from 80 to 100 percent) indicating that they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with each of the curriculum components. Their overall reaction to the broad question examining satisfaction with the preschool education program as a whole produced 93 percent (28) of the sample indicating their satisfaction. In fact, 60 percent were "very satisfied." Furthermore, 93 percent of the total responses fell within the "satisfied" and "very satisfied" categories combined, and 57 percent of that total were within the "very satisfied" category. Only 4 percent of the total responses were either "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied," and 3 percent were a result of "nonresponse."

Even a descriptive analysis of this set of data was difficult in that such a large proportion of parents conveying satisfaction, to whatever degree, made it impossible to discuss areas in which parents found dissatisfaction. Rather, the analysis is limited to examination of areas of the curriculum or program for which the subjects displayed the greatest degree of satisfaction. In Table 8, it seems apparent that the Guilford County parents included in the study were, overall, satisfied with curriculum and programming in their respective centers. There were, however, some components of the program which generated greater proportions of "very satisfied" responses.

The greatest degree of satisfaction among the parents was expressed for the quality of caregiving their children received. Seventy percent indicated that they were "very satisfied." Only one parent voiced dissatisfaction, and the remaining 27 percent were satisfied. Parental concern for a child's care and well-being during a school day (at whatever age level) is an issue of great import. Obviously, the Head Start teachers and staff had acquired the confidence of parents involved in all the programs. The magnitude of their satisfaction was certainly a positive reflection on the Guilford County programs. The quality of caregiving is a factor which could greatly affect parents' overall impression of and satisfaction with a preschool program.

Two other areas of curriculum and programming which generated large percentages of parents who were not only satisfied but very satisfied

were a) the goals and objectives used in the preschool program, and b) the activities used to implement those goals (see Table 8). Sixty-four percent of the sample were very satisfied with each of these educational components.

Further evidence of a high degree of satisfaction was displayed in the parents' attitudes toward five other curriculum components, which resulted in over half (ranging from 54-57 percent) of the sample expressing much satisfaction. The following proportions of parents expressing much satisfaction. Parents were very satisfied with a) motor skills, 54 percent; b) language skills, 54 percent; c) self-help skills, 57 percent; d) social skills, 57 percent; and 3) the special education programming, 54 percent.

That same parent expressed dissatisfaction with both language skills and the overall preschool education program. Although broad generalizations cannot be made in reference to the responses of one parent, it was interesting to note that this particular subject was negative throughout the survey, i.e., being under the opinion that teachers were unfriendly, feeling that her opinion could not affect change, thinking teachers were not giving attention to several of the curriculum areas, and furthermore, being unsatisfied with the job teachers were doing in four of the curriculum and programming items. One explanation of this parent's negativism could be derived from the response given to an open-ended question near the end of the survey. When asked what changes in the center the subject would like to see, the response was that favoritism needed to be eradicated.

The parent felt that her child was not a "favorite" of the teachers and did not receive as much individual attention as some of the children received. Therefore, the question arose as to whether or not this parent's negativism could have been a result of vindictive responses directed toward the teachers personally, rather than as evaluation of the program itself.

The only parent who expressed dissatisfaction with the self-help skills component was equally displeased with the job teachers were doing in both the language and cognitive skills areas. Furthermore, this individual's responses were very similar or typical of those given by the parent just described. However, the second parent displayed much satisfaction with the preschool program overall and gave the center a rating of "9," representing one point away from "excellent" (10) on a scale of one to ten. These results seem to support the investigator's theory that a parent could experience discontent with some individual components of a curriculum, but still express satisfaction with the overall program. This theory was further exemplified by a third parent who gave one of the highest frequencies of negative responses. They, too, were characterized by dissatisfaction with individual components but much satisfaction with the program overall.

Four parents indicated their dissatisfaction with "the job teachers were doing in helping their child grow and develop in the area of cognitive skills." As depicted in table 8, two were very unsatisfied

and two were unsatisfied. Three of these same parents were also unhappy with the language skills component.

Overall, six parents provided negative responses within this particular set of questions. Although this number computes to 20 percent of the total sample of parents, only 4 percent of the total responses were negative for the 11 items, and only two of those six parents gave more than two negative responses.

In summary, the parents involved in the present study were overwhelmingly satisfied with the curriculum and programming strategies incorporated in their children's centers. Due to the occurrence of such large proportions of parents expressing satisfaction to such great degrees, it was determined that a larger sample size in the same county would have rendered the same results.

The Amount of Progress Parents Had Observed in Various Developmental Skills

During the investigator's experiences as a kindergarten teacher, parents seemed to regard progress over the year as a measure of the program's success and/or their child's success. During parent conferences, the greater the progress reported the more positive were parents' expressions concerning the program itself. Therefore, within the present study focusing on parental satisfaction, it seemed imperative to include questions investigating the parents' perceptions or observations of their child's progress. The assumption was made that the presence or absence or degree of progress observed could affect parents' attitudes toward the program in terms of satisfaction.

In other words, the amount of progress they reported observing was conceived by the investigator to be a variable which may contribute to parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming.

Parents of handicapped children in Head Start are given progress reports during I.E.P. conferences as well as oral reports provided by both the parent coordinator and the teachers. The survey items focusing on progress observed asked "How much progress have you seen in...?" It was believed that the parents' perceptions of even some progress was an indication of a certain degree of satisfaction with the child's growth over the year. It was difficult to categorize the attitudes of parents who reported no progress observed in that the investigator could not be certain whether a parent felt the lack of progress to be the result of a delayed child who progressed more slowly or if the lack of progress was the responsibility of the child's program. However, for purposes of analysis, it was determined that a response indicating a lack of progress observed was an indication of some degree of dissatisfaction.

Each of the items which composed this section of the questionnaire addressed five developmental skills: motor, language, self-help, social, and cognitive. These items asked the parents to evaluate the amount of progress observed in a particular skill, and four response categories were provided: None, Some, Much, and Very Much. The developmental skills incorporated in these items were the same skills included in the previous section focusing on parental satisfaction with curriculum and programming. Subsequent to

the analysis of those earlier items which indicated a high degree of satisfaction among the parents with the job teachers were doing in helping the children grow and develop in each of the skills areas, it was anticipated that parents would report similarly high levels of observed progress. The following analysis substantiates that assumption.

Only one parent from the entire sample had not observed progress in either motor or language skills. It was interesting to note that this was the same parent described in the previous section as one who was under the opinion that favoritism existed in her child's center. The remaining 29 parents had observed progress in all the skills areas with a large percentage of the group reporting much to very much progress in each of the developmental skills (see Table 9).

The area in which some parents reported the least amount of progress was in language skills with 23 percent (7) observing "some" progress. However, over half (53 percent) of the parents had observed much progress. It was conjectured that perhaps these respondents were parents of children who were more severely speech and/or language impaired. (Almost 80 percent of the handicapped population in the Head Start program utilized were identified as speech and/or language impaired.) These seven parents may have wished to see more progress, or depending upon the severity of the impairment, they may have had unrealistic expectations concerning the potential outcomes of speech therapy. On the other hand, if their

TABLE 9
Amount of Progress Parents had Observed
in Various Skill Areas

<u>Items</u>	<u>%None</u>	<u>%Some</u>	<u>%Much</u>	<u>%Very Much</u>	<u>NR</u>
17. How much progress have you seen in your child's <u>motor skills</u> since he/she entered the center?	3 (1)	3 (1)	20 (6)	73 (22)	
			93 (28)		
20. How much progress have you seen in your child's <u>language skills</u> since he/she entered the center?	3 (1)	23 (7)	17 (5)	53 (16)	3 (1)
			70 (21)		
23. How much progress have you seen in your child's <u>self-help</u> skills since he/she entered the center?	0	20 (6)	23 (7)	57 (17)	
			80 (24)		
26. How much progress have you seen in your child's <u>social skills</u> since he/she entered the center?	0	17 (5)	33 (10)	50 (15)	
			83 (25)		
29. How much progress have you seen in your child's <u>cognitive skills</u> since he/she entered the center?	0	17 (5)	36 (11)	47 (14)	
			83 (25)		
Total Responses	1%	16%	26%	56%	1%

children were more severely handicapped, their expression of "some" progress could have been a positive response.

Some progress was also observed by 20 percent (6) of the parents in children's self-help skills; by 17 percent (5) in social skills, as well as 17 percent who had observed some progress in their child's cognitive skills. Only 16 percent of the total responses fell within this response category.

To discover whether or not those parents who had observed only some progress were those who tended to be unsatisfied with the job teachers were doing in encouraging growth in these particular skills, individual surveys were analyzed. It was found that of the nine parents who gave responses within the "some" progress category, two-thirds were either satisfied or very satisfied with the job teachers were doing in curriculum and programming in reference to all of the items in that section of the instrument. Therefore, it was determined that the amount of progress these parents had observed was not a function of dissatisfaction, but instead was a personal evaluation of their child's growth in that particular skill.

In reference to the total group's responses for all the items, from 70 to 93 percent of the parents had observed much to very much progress in the various skill areas. The greatest amount of progress observed among the respondents was in the area of motor skills, with 93 percent observing much to very much progress; and 73 percent had observed much progress. The subject's positive evaluations of their child's progress could have been the result of three

factors: a) individual child's maturation, b) the child's exposure to manipulative materials in the centers, which are designed to foster growth in small muscle coordination, as well as, c) the use of outdoor climbing apparatus designed for the development of gross motor coordination.

At least 50 percent of the subjects had observed very much progress in their child's language self-help, and social skills. Exact percentages were 53 percent, 57 percent, and 50 percent respectively.

The analysis of items concerning children's progress in five developmental skills indicated that the majority of the parents had observed (or reported) much progress in each of the skills areas. However, the investigator was aware that these results may be explained in several ways. The parents could have been projecting positive attitudes toward their child's program. On the other hand, the high degree of observed progress could have been a result of the parents' desires to portray their child as one who had shown much progress in order to depict him or her as being successful, assuming that progress indicates success.

Parents' Familiarity with Terms Relative to Mainstreaming

The fifth section of the Parental Attitude Survey was composed of six items (39-44) requesting the parents to provide definitions to six terms relative to mainstreaming. The subjects were not expected to provide elaborate or specific definitions. Instead, the criterion for acceptability of a response was the parents' ability to provide

an accurate definition, no matter how simplistic, which would indicate that they were familiar with the term in question. These particular terms were chosen in that the investigator felt them to be basic to the practice of mainstreaming. The terms chosen were I.E.P. Conference, team meeting, mainstreaming, resource teacher, Public Law 94-142, and handicapped coordinator. The investigator's evaluation of the use of these particular terms will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter.

Responses were analyzed by comparing the respondents' definition to definitions derived from both resource materials and staff members of the Head Start program. Parents' responses were analyzed using three categories: no response, an incorrect response, and a response indicating familiarity. When the surveys were administered to subjects, they were instructed to provide definitions for terms with which they were familiar, but if they did not know the meaning of the term, to leave the item blank. Therefore, when no response was given, it was assumed that the respondent was not familiar with the term in question. The investigator was aware of the possibility that some respondents may have been hesitant to supply an answer for fear of being incorrect, when in fact, they may have known the term's meaning. However, it was not possible to conjecture the frequency of such an occurrence..

For the purpose of analysis, an I.E.P Conference was defined as a conference which is designed to present an Individual Education Program (I.E.P.). This program consists of a statement of the child's

present level, annual goals, short term objectives, and the educational services needed by the child. Individuals involved in the development of the I.E.P. are a representative of the agency, the teacher of the child, the parent or guardian, and when appropriate, the child (Turnball & Schulz, 1979).

As depicted by the data in Table 10, 73 percent (22) of the parents polled did not respond to this item. This frequency of non-response was rather disconcerting to the investigator. One would expect parents of handicapped children to be acquainted with such an important component of their child's education. However, as mentioned earlier, care must be taken in interpreting the meaning of items left blank. It was surprising, however, that such an overwhelming number of parents made no attempt to convey their understanding. The data in Table 10 depicts equally high frequencies of nonresponse for each of the remaining five items. Only four parents displayed an understanding of the term. Although definitions given did not include all the components of the criterion definition, understanding was conveyed through the parents' discussion of goals and objectives designed to provide a plan for the child's special needs.

The criterion used to measure the parents' familiarity with the term "team meeting," was the following definition: a meeting in which the team of professionals and paraprofessionals develop an I.E.P. for each special child, and discuss both progress observed and future needs to be met (Turnball & Schultz, 1979). In response to the question, "What is a team meeting?" two parents provided

TABLE 10
Parental Familiarity with Terms
Relative to Mainstreaming
Depicted in Percentages

<u>Questions</u>	<u>No Response Given</u>	<u>Incorrect Response Given</u>	<u>Response Indicated Familiarity With each Term</u>
39. What is an I.E.P. Conference?	73 (22)	13 (4)	13 (4)
40. What is a team meeting?	83 (25)	10 (3)	7 (2)
41. What does main- streaming mean?	87 (26)	0	13 (4)
42. What is a resource teacher?	67 (20)	7 (2)	26 (8)
43. What is Public Law 94-142?	83 (25)	0	17 (5)
44. What is a handicapped Coordinator?	77 (23)	3 (2)	20 (5)
Total Responses	78 (141)	6 (11)	16 (28)

descriptions which conveyed understanding. Three parents gave incorrect responses by defining it as some form of parent meeting, and the remaining 83 percent (25) chose not to respond.

Mainstreaming refers to the integration of handicapped children into regular classrooms (Turnball & Schulz, 1979). An overwhelmingly high percentage of parents, 87 percent, did not display an understanding of this concept. The investigator predicted that for all

the terms included in this section, mainstreaming would be most familiar; however, the opposite result was obtained. This item received the highest frequency of nonresponse. If these nonresponses were, in fact, due to a lack of knowledge, these results are most disconcerting. Close to 80 percent of the total population of handicapped children in Head Start programs with the county polled were identified as speech and/or language impaired. This handicapping condition may not be considered one of the more severe; however, these children were provided services by the handicapped component of the agency. The investigator proposed that all agencies have the responsibility to inform and educate parents concerning the principles and elements of mainstreaming. Forty-three percent of the total sample had enrolled their handicapped child for a period of two years, and yet, were unfamiliar with the term "mainstreaming."

Parents' responses to the item requesting a definition of a resource teacher were analyzed using the following example definition: A resource teacher is a special education teacher who provides individual or small group instruction to handicapped students, both within and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, these teachers are involved in the development of I.E.P.'s and give suggestions for instructional techniques and curriculum adaptations designed to meet the needs of the special child (Turnball & Schultz, 1979).

More parents were familiar with this term than with any other. A total of 26 percent (8) of the sample provided acceptable definitions.

Sixty-seven percent did not respond, and 7 percent (2) of the parents gave incorrect responses. Perhaps a larger percentage of the parents were familiar with this particular term due to the presence of a resource teacher on staff who worked directly with the speech- and/or language-impaired children. The feedback parents received on an individual basis may have better acquainted them with a resource teacher's role.

The item concerning Public Law 94-142 rendered responses from 17 percent (5) of the parents who displayed their familiarity with this mandate. The basic knowledge that this legislation mandated that free appropriate public education be available to all handicapped children was the criterion for determining familiarity. An overwhelmingly high percentage of parents were unable to define or identify Public Law 94-142 (83 percent). Only five parents were familiar with this important piece of legislation. Possibly the remaining 83 percent (25) were aware of a law which required the acceptance of handicapped children into normal programs, but were unfamiliar with the law's nomenclature. However, parents of handicapped children need to be informed about the law and its provisions. To reiterate, a great need for parent education was evidenced in these results.

The last item in the fifth section of the instrument asked the parents, "What is a handicapped coordinator?" The parent coordinator of the agency involved in the present study described this individual as one who directs and coordinates all services available to the special

child through the handicapped component of the Head Start program. Twenty percent (5) of the respondents conveyed their familiarity with the role of a handicapped coordinator, but 77 percent (23) were unfamiliar with the term. Responding with an incorrect definition, one parent thought a handicapped coordinator was synonymous with a special education teacher. The second incorrect response was obtained from a parent who gave the name of the parent coordinator.

The data in Table 10 depict that for the total responses to the items concerning familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming, 78 percent of these open-ended items were left blank. Only 16 percent of the total responses were categorized as responses which indicated parental familiarity with individual terms.

One of the investigator's initial assumptions concerning the present study was that if information gathered concerning four of the variables indicated that a majority of the parents were positive in their expressions (i.e., were satisfied with curriculum and programming, etc.), then perhaps a lack of familiarity with terminology relative to mainstreaming could provide insights into a rationale for those parents' positive attitudes (i.e., lower expectations on the part of parents influenced by a lack of knowledge). This assumption may or may not be true. The investigator was cognizant that specific terms in isolation were not necessarily a measure of parents' overall awareness of the principles and strategies used in the mainstreaming process; however, it was surmised that parents who were more familiar with basic terms relative to mainstreaming were more familiar

with the practice than parents who were unable to define those few terms. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that the more knowledgeable parents may also differ in their attitudes toward both the program's curriculum components and toward the teachers' strategies.

To clarify, the investigator conjectured that perhaps more knowledgeable parents who were more aware of the strategies and curriculum adaptations that ideally should be used may also be more scrutinizing when evaluating a mainstreamed program. Hence, their attitudes may be less positive as a result of greater parental expectations concerning the quality of their child's preschool education. This assertion was not necessarily a negative reflection on the programs involved in the study, but instead pertained to any program which mainstreamed preschoolers.

Although the present study's descriptive design and its sampling technique (census) did not allow the investigator to draw inferences or make broad generalizations, data were analyzed further to examine the overall responses of five subjects who gave the highest frequencies of correct definitions to the terms in question. Five parents from the total sample displayed their familiarity with three or more of the terms. An examination of this group's overall responses to other sections of the survey indicated that they were satisfied to very satisfied with curriculum and programming strategies. A total of 45 percent of their responses fell within the very satisfied category.

Computation of their total responses, in reference to progress observed in the children's various developmental skills, revealed

that 72 percent of those responses were within the "very much" progress category. Although these five parents comprised only one-sixth of the total sample, these findings were of interest to the investigator and raised questions concerning the validity of the previous assumption of the possible relatedness of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming and parental familiarity with or knowledge of terms relative to mainstreaming.

Type of Instruction

Structural problems within item 38 (see Appendix) lessened its usefulness in attempts to determine the amount of instruction parents had received in mainstreaming. Problems arose during the initial analysis of parents' responses in that the investigator realized the item assumed too much knowledge. A different strategy would have been more methodologically appropriate. For example, this particular item should have been preceded by an item designed to determine if they had had any instruction. Then a second item could have explored the derivation of that instruction. Also, the response choices offered are a combination of two kinds of information--the place and the source. The item needed further revision by breaking the question into two parts.

The validity of the item is questionable; however, the data obtained were the following: 64 percent (19) of the parents reported having no training in mainstreaming; 16 percent (5) indicated that they had attended a class with other parents to learn about it

(however, one cannot be sure where the class was held); 7 percent (2) had heard about it from a friend (the extent is not ascertainable); one parent who was a trained teacher had taken a special education course; and 7 percent (2) of the parents indicated that someone at the day care center had told them about it. No respondent had read about it and one parent did not respond.

Rating of the Center

Item 37 consisted of a question which included a hypothetical scale of measurement. The parents were asked, "On a scale of 1-10, with 1 meaning poor and 10 meaning excellent, how would you rate your child's center?"

Over half (53 percent) of the sample rated the center as "excellent." The lowest ratings were obtained from two parents who evaluated their child's center with a rating of 5. One parent did not respond, and the remaining 37 percent (11) gave ratings between 7 and 9. These results seemed to reflect positive attitudes toward the respective centers; however, difficulty arises when attempts are made to interpret the data obtained from hypothetical scales due to a possible variance between the respondent's and the investigator's interpretation of the various gradations within the scale.

Open-ended Item

The final item analyzed was an open-ended question which asked the respondents, "What changes would you like to see in the center?" Only six parents responded; five expressed a desire for change,

and one parent responded with a comment of praise for both the center and staff. There was no similarity among their expressions therefore, all five responses were reported.

1. More parent volunteers were needed to help children with special needs
2. The transportation system needed improvement
3. A graduation ceremony should be conducted each year
4. Improvements were needed (these improvements were not specified)
5. Better relations between the parent and teacher were needed and favoritism (for children) should be eliminated.

The discussion within this chapter has presented a descriptive analysis of the overall data obtained from the parents polled. The following chapter is comprised of conclusions drawn from these data, in reference to individual variables, and contains a rationale developed for the purpose of determining parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming, which was the focal point of the present study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of the present study was to examine parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. Specifically, it was designed to assess the attitudes and beliefs of parents of handicapped children who were being mainstreamed in preschool programs.

The study was descriptive and focused on an area not previously investigated. A detailed discussion of each item and group of items was presented in the previous chapter. Hence, the emphasis of this discussion is focused on the assumptions surrounding each of the five variables under investigation, and how the investigator perceived their interrelatedness to contribute to determining the hypothetical variable, parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming.

The investigator was cognizant of several methodological considerations which were of great concern in reference to both the sampling techniques and the survey design. These concerns are discussed in an evaluative form which outlines the potential effects these methodological limitations may have exerted over the resulting data.

In the inception of this research, the investigator formulated the operational definition of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming as follows:

With respect to parents' responses obtained from an attitude survey, it was assumed that parents who perceived themselves to possess a significant role within the center program who were also under the opinion that a preschool education program existed containing several curriculum components, who were satisfied with the job teachers were doing in reference to curriculum and programming, and who had observed progress in the various developmental skill areas were more satisfied than parents who were negative in several of these expressions.

This overall assumption designed for the determination of parental satisfaction was viewed as a compilation of individual assumptions surrounding each variable within the broader overlying assumption. The following discussion is a concise presentation of the investigator's interpretation of the overall data gathered for each variable, in order to illuminate the data's individual components, which were assumed to contribute to the formulation of a conclusion regarding parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming among the parents polled.

The rationale for determination of the dependent variable, parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming, is structured in the following manner: the reiteration of independent variables under investigation, the assumptions surrounding each of these variables, and the overall results obtained for each variable. The conclusions were drawn accordingly.

Parents' Perceptions of Their Roles Within the
Preschool Program

Assumption: With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who thought the teachers were concerned with their opinion, who through their opinions had an effect on the way the center was operated, who had been asked by the staff if they were satisfied, and who believed changes would be made in an attempt to satisfy them, perceived themselves to have a more significant role within the preschool program than parents who were negative in several of these expressions.

Findings revealed that the total sample believed the teachers were concerned with their opinion, and 9 out of 10 parents thought those opinions had an effect on the way the center was operated. With the exception of two parents, the group indicated that they had been asked by the staff if they were satisfied with the services provided to their child, and almost three quarters (73 percent) of the parents believed that if they expressed dissatisfaction, changes would be made (by program staff) in attempts to satisfy them. On the basis of these findings, it was concluded that an overwhelming majority of the parents polled seemed to perceive themselves to possess a significant role within their child's preschool program.

The overwhelming high percentages of parents yielding positive responses to all of the items which focused on this variable was interpreted in several ways. From a broad perspective, it seems

that an extremely positive relationship existed between the parents and teachers. With the total sample feeling their opinions to be of import to teachers, this assertion seems justifiable. Evidently, the teachers and staff had displayed a genuine interest in the parents' attitudes toward the program, and that interest was reflected in the parents' responses. The group's perceived power to cause change was most impressive, and the data obtained from this particular item provided one of the most outstanding supports for the contention that parents believed themselves to be a significant component of their child's center.

Parental Satisfaction with Curriculum and Programming

Assumption: With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who were satisfied with the job teachers were doing in several of the curriculum and programming components were more satisfied with preschool mainstreaming than parents who expressed dissatisfaction in several of these areas.

In the inception of the present study, the finding of plurality among parents in reference to satisfaction with curriculum and programming was viewed as a potentially strong indicator of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. Such a plurality was evidenced in the resulting data. Over 90 percent (93) of the total responses to items concerning satisfaction with curriculum and programming were contained in the combination of the satisfied and very satisfied categories.

Not only did the group display satisfaction, but the degree to which it was expressed was most impressive. Over half of the sample displayed the highest level of satisfaction (very satisfied) for nine of the eleven items, and the rate of frequencies when the two categories of satisfaction were combined ranged from 80 to 100 percent. Therefore, it was concluded that the parents sampled indicated that they were satisfied with curriculum and programming in the various centers.

The investigator was cognizant of limitations in interpreting data measuring attitudes. One cannot ascertain whether the parents expressed their true feelings or if their responses were influenced by extraneous variables such as a sense of allegiance to the teacher or teachers who were involved in the program or the fear that their negative responses would be a negative reflection on the program or a lack of confidence in the investigator's assurance of anonymity, or the effect of the investigator's presence while the respondent completed the survey. With the potential effects of these extraneous variables realized, it was concluded that the parents included in this study indicated that they were satisfied with the curriculum and programming components.

Parents' Opinions Concerning the Existence of
an Educational Program

Assumption: With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who were under the opinion that an educational program existed including curriculum and programming were

more satisfied with preschool mainstreaming than parents who responded negatively to several items assessing that opinion.

The sample parents overwhelmingly conveyed their affirmative beliefs and confidence in the existence of an educational program. This conclusion was based on the overall high frequencies of affirmative beliefs expressed among the sample, with frequencies ranging from 83 to 100 percent for all the items measuring this variable. Further examples of the extent of the group's consensus lay in frequency of overall affirmative responses (93%) to items focusing on the educational program.

These findings were conjectured to be the result of the amount of program contact. Head Start typically utilizes goals and objectives for the development of all children--handicapped and nonhandicapped alike. The attendance of the parents of handicapped children at I.E.P. conferences evidently acquainted them with both the goals and objectives as well as the teaching strategies used to implement those goals. Hence, these parents may have been more familiar with curriculum and programming strategies than were parents of nonhandicapped. However, that assumption was not examined in this study.

With such a large percentage of the total population of handicapped children (48) being classified as speech and/or language impaired (78%), the parents' contact with the program's speech therapist may have also heightened parental awareness. Seeing and hearing evidence from the speech therapist that specific goals and objectives had been planned, accompanied by specific activities to

foster growth or facilitate progress in speech and language skills, may have contributed to the frequency of positive expressions. Experiences with the therapist may have had a ripple effect, in that it may have been assumed that such provisions were being made for other developmental skills.

Progress Parents had Observed in Various Skill Areas

Assumption: With respect to parents' responses, it was assumed that parents who had observed some progress in several of the developmental skills were more satisfied with preschool mainstreaming than parents who had not observed progress in several skills.

The investigator viewed the assessment of progress observed as a viable approach to ascertaining parental satisfaction in that progress is an observable and a measurable characteristic of children. Hence, its visibility would facilitate the evaluation of it. An important point, however, is that the evaluation of progress may be relative, depending upon the role of the individual who provides the evaluation. The subjective nature of parenthood may elicit reports of greater degrees of progress than would be expected from teachers evaluating the same growth.

This phenomenon was apparent to the investigator and it was taken into consideration when reviewing the data. However, it must also be considered that whether or not a high degree of progress had in fact occurred, a parent's response in that direction would

indicate that they either "felt" or reported that such progress existed. It is plausible that parents may wish to portray their child as one who has "progressed by leaps and bounds," as a function of parental pride in their child. As mentioned earlier in previous chapters, parents may perceive progress observed to be a measure of their child's success, hence, a positive reflection on his or her school program. It was assumed, therefore, that the frequencies of responses for each category of the amount of progress observed could contribute to the determination of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. The investigator does not imply that all progress is the result of preschool attendance; however, the parents' evaluations of progress observed were defined within a preschool program context for the purpose of conducting this study.

Only one parent in the entire sample of 30 reported having observed no progress in two of the developmental skill areas. Over 80 percent (82) of the total responses for all items fell within the "much" and "very much" categories combined. The extent of progress observed (or reported) was reflected in the finding that over half of the parents indicated that they had observed much progress in all but one skill (cognitive).

Given these findings, it was concluded that among the parents polled, a vast majority reported that they had observed much to very much progress in all of the developmental skills areas.

Determining Parental Satisfaction with Preschool Mainstreaming

The previous discussion outlined the overall findings relative to each variable in order to construct the substantiation for a final determination of the presence or absence of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. To reiterate, the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data generated for each variable were the following.

1. An overwhelming majority of the parents polled seemed to perceive themselves as filling a significant role within their child's preschool center.
2. An overwhelming majority of the parents polled gave responses which indicated that they were of the opinion that a preschool education program containing various curriculum and programming components existed within their child's center.
3. A majority of the parents polled seemed to be very satisfied with the curriculum and programming strategies utilized by teachers within their child's center.
4. A majority of the parents polled reported that they had observed much progress in the various developmental skills areas.

When these findings were incorporated into the investigator's operational definition of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming, the formulation of a final conclusion resulted. That conclusion was as follows:

With respect to parents' (of handicapped preschoolers) responses obtained from the Parental Attitudes Survey, it was found

that of the parents polled, a majority seemed to perceive themselves as filling a significant role within their child's preschool center: were under the opinion that a preschool education program, containing various curriculum and programming components, existed within their child's center; seemed to be very satisfied with curriculum and programming strategies utilized by the teacher; and had observed much progress in their child's various developmental skills.

The final conclusion on the basis of these findings was formulated as follows:

With respect to parents' overall responses to the Parental Attitude Survey, it was concluded that a majority of the parents polled were satisfied with preschool mainstreaming in the various centers.

It is important to note that the findings of this study and the conclusions reached were limited to a poll of parents within the population of parents of handicapped preschoolers currently being mainstreamed in the Guilford County Head Start program. Although information provided by this census may be of import to the Guilford County Head Start program, it is limited to that specific population of parents at a specific point in time. Therefore, generalizations to other populations were not possible. Lack of generalizability also existed in reference to the remaining 37 percent of the parents who were not represented in the study.

Parents' Familiarity with Terminology Relative
to Mainstreaming

The fifth variable under investigation was parental familiarity with terms relative to mainstreaming. This variable was extracted from the previous discussion of other independent variables which were assumed to contribute to the determination of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming for the following reason: In the inception of the present study, the investigator conjectured that perhaps information gathered concerning parental familiarity with terminology relative to mainstreaming could contribute to an interpretation of the overall findings of the study.

Assumption: With respect to parents' overall responses obtained from the attitude survey, it was assumed that, if data gathered concerning the other variables under investigation led the investigator to conclude that parents were satisfied with preschool mainstreaming endeavors, then findings concerning parental familiarity with terminology may provide insights into the interpretation of the overall findings of the study.

The parents overall responses to items focusing on this variable indicated that an overwhelming percentage of definition-type items were left blank (no response). Over three-quarters (78 percent) of the total responses fell within this category. The nonresponse frequencies ranged from 67 to 87 percent for these six items requesting definitions of the terms.

As discussed earlier in the analysis of data for these items, the interpretation of nonresponse is sometimes difficult. However, when

surveys were distributed, subjects were instructed to provide definitions for terms with which they were familiar, but if they did not know the meaning of the term, to leave the item blank. Therefore, when no response was given, it was assumed that the respondent was unfamiliar with the term in question. Parents' hesitancy to supply a definition for fear of being incorrect could have possibly affected the frequency of the overall nonresponse rate. It was not possible for the investigator to conjecture the frequency of that occurrence. Therefore, the data were interpreted as indicating that from 67 to 87 percent of the parents polled were either unable to or did not supply definitions to each of the six terms. A lengthy discussion of the overall results was presented in the analysis of those data; therefore, it will not be repeated. Based on the findings in this section of items, it was concluded that a vast majority of the parents polled were unfamiliar with six terms relative to mainstreaming:

I.E.P. Conference, team meeting, mainstreaming, resource teacher, Public Law 94-142, and handicapped coordinator.

At the termination of the analysis of data, the investigator attempted to justify the earlier assumption surrounding the variable under discussion. The two conclusions that (a) parents seemed to be satisfied with preschool mainstreaming, and (b) were unfamiliar with terms relative to mainstreaming provided a basis from which to draw an additional conclusion concerning the possible relatedness of those two findings.

Initially, the investigator's intent was to formulate a theory which proposed that the parents included in the study (or from any sample rendering the same type of data) may have been satisfied with preschool mainstreaming as the result of a lack of basic knowledge surrounding the process. For example, parents' positive attitudes may have been influenced by lower expectations on the part of parents who were unfamiliar with teaching strategies and curriculum components that ideally should be utilized in a preschool program. Given the overall results of the study, one might conclude the proposed theory to be true. However, the investigator found confounding evidence which clouded the acceptance of such a theory. That confounding evidence was found in the response of the five parents who were able to provide correct definitions to three or more of the terms. The analysis of these results were discussed in Chapter IV; therefore, they will not be reiterated here. Briefly, however, when their total responses were computed for two sections of the instrument, it was found that for items concerning satisfaction with curriculum and programming, 45 percent of their total responses were within the "very satisfied" category (no dissatisfaction was displayed), and for items concerning progress observed, 72 percent of their responses were within the "very much progress" observed. Although this examination focused on only five parents, the insights gained confounded the previous theory concerning the relatedness of

satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming and familiarity with terms relative to the process. Furthermore, doubts were raised as to the validity of using familiarity with terminology as an assumed measure of knowledge relative to the process of mainstreaming. Therefore, the investigator concluded that a displayed lack of knowledge concerning terms relative to mainstreaming was not, within itself, an efficient device for the explanation of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming.

When assuming that a relatedness exists between familiarity with terminology relative to mainstreaming and parental satisfaction, one important point needs to be considered: a display of familiarity with terminology does not within itself assure that parents are also familiar with the fact that different levels of quality exist among different types of centers in reference to curriculum and programming strategies.

Comparison of the Findings from the Present Study with those of Previous Research

Conclusions drawn from the present study were similar to those derived from the investigator's past research (Austin, 1981a; 1982a). The data obtained from these studies indicated, as did the present study, that the parents polled were satisfied with reference to the variables under investigation.

The three studies conducted by the investigator all dealt with parental satisfaction and utilized similar instruments. The differences among these studies lay in the types of programs involved.

The three program types were a) a segregated (all handicapped) special preschool program, b) nonintegrated developmental day care center, and c) an integrated preschool (early intervention) program. Although they differed regarding their functions and purposes, the parents from all three programs displayed high levels of program satisfaction.

The high level of program satisfaction among the parents whose children were enrolled in day care was explained in part by their reputations as "quality" day care centers which utilized the concepts of child development and provided curriculum components which focused on all developmental areas. Secondly, the investigator observed the display of an excellent rapport between parents and teachers. Much program contact was evidenced through the observation of parents picking up children at the end of the day, giving them an opportunity to converse with the teacher, and actually seeing the types of activities children were involved in within the classroom.

The high frequency of positive attitudes expressed by the special preschool parents were also believed to be affected by the parent-teacher relationship. Teachers worked very closely with parents during periodic I.E.P. conferences, and encouraged parent involvement in the classrooms. The investigator observed what seemed to be a genuine interest in the parents on the part of program staff.

Parents of handicapped children in the Head Start program were provided with services designed especially for them within the

the "handicapped component" of the agency, and that component contained personnel who worked directly with the parents on a one-to-one basis. A parent coordinator was on staff to act as a liaison between the parents and the agency.

An evaluation of these three studies retrospectively revealed that one central theme emerged. The presence and the amount of program contact, and the positive nature of that contact, seemed to be integral to the explanation of parental satisfaction in all three studies. Hence, the investigator concluded that the measurement of parents' perceptions concerning amount of program contact could have been a valuable index in the interpretation of parental satisfaction.

The investigator's credence in the role program contact may play in explaining parental satisfaction was shared by another investigator. Phillip (1980) drew a similar conclusion when investigating mothers' perceptions of program contact. Findings indicated that mothers who reported a low level of program contact on data collection instruments voiced dissatisfaction with their child's preschool program during personal interviews.

Contact was defined as the number of face-to-face interactions or telephone conversations between a mother and a staff member. Phillip (1980) pointed out that contact included symbolism, such as caring on the part of staff and sincere displays of interest for the mothers as well as for their child. Symbolic as it may seem in some aspects, Phillip (1980) felt that "perceptions of the amount of

program contact is frequently overlooked in evaluation studies, and may indeed be a critical indicator of mothers' dissatisfaction with preschool programs" (pp. 181, 182).

Although the present research resulted in conclusions drawn surrounding several variables which were assumed to contribute to the determination of parental satisfaction; the investigator believed that program contact could have played a significant role in the parents' positive expressions. This belief was exemplified not only through the amount of parent-staff contact that is typical of Head Start, but also through parents' responses to survey items focusing on their opinions concerning parent roles within the center program. The total group gave responses which indicated that they believed the teachers were concerned with their opinion; they had conversations with the teachers, and the teachers gave them oral reports about their child's progress. If it can be assumed that the parents expressed their true beliefs, then these results certainly were indicative of positive attitudes toward the teachers as well as evidence of much program contact. These findings contribute to the investigator's belief that amount of program contact may have been an underlying factor which influenced the results of the present study as well as those previously conducted (Austin, 1981a; 1982a). Hence, it was determined that future research focusing on parental satisfaction should include the empirical measurement of parents' perceptions of program contact.

Methodological Considerations

Bias arising from the present study's sampling procedure were of great concern to the investigator. The inability to secure a complete list of parents' names and addresses greatly hindered the investigation process. The agency attempts to protect the confidentiality of the parents proved to be a great hindrance. After several instruments had been collected, the agency agreed to release the names of prospective subjects. This late decision resulted in the first portion of the surveys being completed during a parent meeting; hence, they were completed by parents who may have been more participative in center activities. The second portion of the surveys was administered to parents during children's speech therapy sessions which may have influenced parents' responses to items concerning language skills and those which focused on special services.

The collection of surveys at the annual picnic (2) contributed to the inclusion of parents whose responses may have been biased. The data collection procedure was completed by the investigator face-to-face and the instruments were self-administered by parents. The parents polled were not familiar with the investigator and may not have felt comfortable about expressing negative attitudes for fear of loss of anonymity. However, throughout the collection procedure, parents were very receptive, friendly, and most cooperative. Data were not collected on the identity of the particular center each child attended; therefore, the investigator cannot be sure if all centers were represented.

The instrument may also have introduced bias caused by the sequencing of items. Questions were grouped to provide continuity for the respondent (e.g., parents' opinions concerning the existence of activities provided which focused on motor skills; degree of satisfaction with the job teachers were doing in the area of motor skills, followed by an item asking how much progress they had observed.) However, this method of construction may have biased parents' responses in that one response may have influenced their response to the following question in the survey.

Two items should have been eliminated and the information gathered through more appropriate items. These were item 37, which asked the parents to rate their child's center, and item 38, which inquired about the amount of instruction or training in preschool mainstreaming.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research was to examine parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming as measured by parents' responses to an attitude survey. Furthermore, the investigator viewed this research as an opportunity for parents to evaluate their child's program, an opportunity not previously afforded, and a right which has typically been ignored.

The present study examined five variables which were assumed to contribute to the determination of parental satisfaction with preschool mainstreaming. A descriptive self-report design was utilized in conjunction with questionnaires. The investigator constructed the instrument, entitled Parental Attitude Survey, which was an adaptation of two similar instruments used in previous studies (Austin, 1981b; 1982b).

The target population was parents of handicapped preschoolers who were being mainstreamed in Guilford County Head Start programs at the time of the study. From the total population of 48 handicapped children's parents, a poll of 30 made up the sample, which comprised 63 percent of the total population.

The data obtained were subjected to descriptive analysis, and frequencies and percentages of response categories were computed for each item. Resulting data were presented in five tables.

It was concluded that, with respect to parents' (of handicapped pre-schoolers) responses to the Parental Attitude Survey, a majority of the parents polled were satisfied with preschool mainstreaming.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations for future needs and research are suggested:

1. A great need for parent education was evidenced in reference to the issues and practices of mainstreaming. The provision of workshops within the preschool program's structure could effectively serve this purpose.
2. More research of this nature needs to be conducted using larger samples. This would enable more sophisticated examination of existing relationships.
3. Additional studies including the measurement of parents' perceptions of the amount of program contact could provide valuable information relative to program satisfaction.
4. Parents have a right to be included in evaluation processes and educators need to discover whether they are meeting parents' expectations. The role which parents play as a part of the family unit necessitates that educators seek their approval and support in order to provide continuity to the developing child.

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APPENDIX

1. Do you think the teachers at the day care center are concerned with your opinion of the program?
_____ Yes _____ No
2. Do you think that parents' opinions toward the program have an effect on the way the day care center is operated?
_____ Yes _____ No
3. Have you ever been asked by the day care staff and/or director if you were satisfied with the services provided to you and your child?
_____ Yes _____ No
4. Would you like to have an opportunity to tell the teachers or director how you feel about the center?
_____ Yes _____ No
5. If you were dissatisfied or unhappy with something going on in the center, would you feel free to tell the staff about it?
_____ Yes _____ No
6. If you answered "Yes" to the preceding question, do you think that changes would be made in an attempt to satisfy you?
_____ Yes _____ No
7. Do you ever "visit" or have conversation with the teachers upon arrival or when you pick up your child in the afternoon?
_____ Yes _____ No

The following questions concern your opinion of the preschool education program at the center. All day care centers provide caregiving (provisions for eating, sleeping, and adult supervision for children). Some day care centers, however, include an education plan which focuses on several areas of your child's development, and attempts to help him progress over the year. The following questions examine what you think is going on in your child's center.

Circle the word which corresponds to how satisfied or how unsatisfied you are.

12. Do you think that the day care teachers have goals and objectives such as, "child will be able to recognize colors," or "child will be able to catch a ball") for your child's preschool education?
- _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
13. If so, how satisfied are you with these goals and objectives?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
14. If you think the teachers do have goals or objectives for the year, how satisfied are you with the activities (such as, number games, science activities, songs, stories, art activities) the teachers use to go along with their goals for your child?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
15. Do you think the teachers use lesson plans, or provide activities to help your child progress in his/her motor skills (such as, climbing, running, jumping, throwing, etc.)
- _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not

16. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing with your child in the area of his/her motor skills?
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
17. How much progress have you seen in your child's motor skills since he/she entered the day care center?
 None Some Much Very much
18. Do you think the teachers plan activities to help your child progress in his/her language skills (new words, reading stories, conversation, his ability to talk with other children):
 _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
19. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's language skills?
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
20. How much progress have you seen in your child's language skills since he/she entered the day care center?
 None Some Much Very much
21. Do you think the teachers give attention to your child's self-help skills (such as eating, table manners, dressing himself, toileting, washing hands)?
 _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
22. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's self-help skills?
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
23. How much progress have you seen in your child's self-help skills since he/she entered the day care center?
 None Some Much Very much
24. Do you think the teachers give attention to your child's social skills (such as, getting along with others, responding to other people, interacting with adults)?
 _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
25. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing concerning your child's social skills?
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

26. How much progress have you seen in your child's social skills since he/she entered the day care center?
- None Some Much Very much
27. Do you think the teachers plan activities which focus on your child's cognitive skills (such as: thinking through problems, reasoning, learning games, colors, numbers)?
- _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
28. How satisfied are you with the job the teachers are doing in helping your child grow and develop in the area of cognitive skills?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
29. How much progress have you seen in your child's cognitive skills since he/she entered the day care center?
- None Some Much Very much
30. Do you think the teachers make adjustments in the program to fit your child's special needs?
- _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
31. If you answered Yes to question 30, how satisfied are you with the special adjustments made for your child in the classroom?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
32. Do you think the staff or special education teacher has planned an education program specifically for your child to meet his/her special needs?
- _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know if they do or not
33. If you answered Yes to question 32, how satisfied are you with the special education program planned for your child?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied
34. Overall, how do you feel about the quality of caregiving (how well the adults take care of your child during the day) at your child's center?
- Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

35. A preschool education program means that the staff at the day care center not only take care of your child during the day, but they would also plan activities to help your child learn and to grow in many different kinds of skills. You have answered questions about motor skills, self-help skills, language skills, and cognitive skills. All of these make up a preschool education program. Overall, how satisfied are you with the preschool education program at your child's center?

Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

36. What changes would you like to see at the center?

37. On a scale of 1 - 10, with 1 meaning "poor" and 10 meaning "excellent," how would you rate your child's day care center?

38. How much instruction or training have you had in the area of preschool mainstreaming? Please CHECK ONLY ONE

- _____ 1. A friend told me about it.
 _____ 2. Someone at the day care center told me about it.
 _____ 3. I went to a class (or several classes) with other parents to learn about it.
 _____ 4. I learned on my own by reading a book.
 _____ 5. I took special education classes in college.
 _____ 6. I have had no training in mainstreaming and really don't know much about it.

Please answer the following questions. (Short answers)

39. What is an I.E.P. conference?
40. What is a team meeting?
41. What does mainstreaming mean?
42. What is a resource teacher?

43. What is Public Law 94-142?
44. What is a handicapped coordinator?

Background Information

45. Child's age _____
46. How long has your child been enrolled in the center? _____
47. Number of children in your family _____
48. Number of children in your family who have attended Head Start? _____
49. Your relationship with the child: Mother _____ Father _____
Grandmother _____ Grandfather _____ Aunt _____ Uncle _____
Guardian _____ Other _____ (please explain)
50. Your present marital status: Single _____ Married _____

THANK YOU